

THE
MONTHLY MISCELLANY.

VOL. VI.

MARCH, 1842.

No. 3.

THE VISION OF EZEKIEL EXPLAINED AND
APPLIED.

THE Prophet Ezekiel introduces the book, which in the Old Scriptures is ascribed to him, with the description of a sublime and impressive vision of the glory of Jehovah, which vision appeared to him when he was called to the exercise of the prophetic office. It was, to use his own words, "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord;" and it is a proof of the exaltation of mind, under the influence of which the Prophet entered upon the important and responsible work to which he was summoned by the spirit of God. He was chosen to declare the purposes, to utter the threatenings and rebukes, and to proclaim the laws of Jehovah in the ears of his people. This was to be his work. It required, for its right and successful execution, strong convictions of the truth, a solemn elevation of mind, a spirit of unwavering fidelity, and especially such a clear and full conception and persuasion of the might, the wisdom, and the glory of that great Being at the head of the universe, whose servant he was to be, as should destroy all fear in his soul, and arm him with strength of purpose and a confident courage.

And this is surely the best preparation for any great work—to be filled and possessed first of all with the great idea or conception which is to be set forth, embodied, represented in that work. The

artist must first have some noble image in his mind, before he can give it form and body in the marble or on the canvass; and he who executes the form without having the image in his mind, may be an accurate copyer or imitator, but he does not merit the name and praise of a true artist,—he does not use his art to represent what is in himself, and what his soul is longing to express fully. So too the true poet must have in his mind an image of beauty or a high sentiment, which he wishes to work up into a character which others may admire, or to utter in strains which shall convey, by the sure influence of sympathy, the sentiment to other minds. And if he have not this inward preparation, this glowing conception, this passionate affection, which must find a voice to utter itself in, for its own relief,—if all this be wanting, he is no true poet. The case is the same with the reformer. The minds of those individuals of our race who have distinguished themselves as social benefactors of the world, who have moulded the institutions or framed the laws or removed the abuses which have promoted or stood in the way of the civilization and happiness of their fellow-men—their minds were first filled with some great idea or principle. They could not rest till they had realized it; it mastered them; every element in their nature was subject to it; all their energies were concentrated upon one point; they thus gained a physical, an intellectual, and a moral power, before which all obstacles yielded, and the great purpose which they had in their minds was accomplished, and they became thenceforth the honored benefactors of their kind. The same is true with regard to the performance of any duty or the discharge of any office that may be assumed by men. If there be, first of all, in the mind of a person a right and high sense of the importance of the trust, if he “magnify his office,” in the true and proper way, as St. Paul magnified his office as the Apostle of the Gentiles; if he be solemnly impressed with the weight of responsibility that rests upon him; if he hear within his soul a voice commanding him to go forward, a voice which he dares not disobey, an impulse which he dares not resist; if this principle of duty be fixed thus firmly in the mind, (and this is of course the great object which Christianity proposes to effect) then the most laborious duties become easy, the most disagreeable become pleasant, the greatest burdens are cheerfully borne, the most appalling dangers are resolutely met and overcome.

And so it was with the Prophet Ezekiel when he entered upon his office. His mind was possessed with one great, leading, all-absorbing idea. What was it? It was the grand idea of Jehovah, the God whom he served, the God who had inspired him, and to execute whose trust and in obedience to whose commands he was now about to commence the discharge of the important and solemn functions that devolved upon a prophet of the Most High. And what was the conception in his mind of Jehovah? What was that "appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord," with which his mind had been furnished, in order to elevate it to a proper sense of the dignity and the sacredness of his office? In answering these inquiries let us proceed to consider and to interpret the vision, which he declares that he saw. He was an exile, it will be borne in mind, from his native land. He had been carried into captivity, with others of his countrymen, by the King of Babylon. While he dwelt there with his fellow-captives, "by the river Chebar, in the land of the Chaldeans," the word of the Lord came unto Ezekiel. The vision which the Prophet saw is conceived and related in the manner of the Eastern countries of the world, which abounds in bold images and figures. Omitting many of the particular circumstances, let us attend only to the principal features of the vision, as related in Ezekiel, Chap. i.

The "*four living creatures*" are the conception of a mind studying to comprise under a single image all the various individuals of the animated kingdom of nature. The image is compounded of four creatures which are the most excellent that inhabit the earth and with which we are acquainted. The lion, which is esteemed chief among beasts, and is a symbol of strength; the eagle, first among birds, and a symbol of swiftness and of penetrating vision; the ox, which is the first among tame animals, the most serviceable of all animals to man, and which is symbolical of patient and fruitful labor; by the help of this animal the earth being subdued, agriculture, the chief art, upon which all other arts are based, carried on, and the ground made to bear those products upon which the daily support of life depends; and lastly man, the head of all creatures, the master-work of God, the lord of all below, who is gifted with reason, and made in the image of the Creator. These four are the most excellent among

animals that inhabit the earth, and by uniting these together the imagination formed in ancient times the conception of the *cherub*, which represented to the mind the several qualities of each possessed by a single individual,—an individual which does not exist in reality, but which is yet conceivable. And this conception is a very natural one. For if the qualities and attributes for which each of these creatures is eminent exist separately, they must all belong to some single being, to the Creator certainly, by whom they were originally distributed. And if he distributed and bestowed them originally, as we see he has, then it is clear that he might, if he had seen fit to do so, have bestowed them all upon some single creature. At least it must be clear to all minds that acknowledge the truth of a Divine Providence, that the power and control of the Creator extend to all the creatures he has made. They are all subject to him. They all conspire to do his service, to execute his commands, and to fulfil his purposes. And this seems to be what is taught by that part of the vision we are at present considering. All the faculties, propensities, and endowments of the several animals in the universe are under the guidance and control of God, as much as if there were but a single created being in the universe, that possessed their attributes. If by a bold stretch of the imagination we should endeavor to place ourselves in the position held by the Creator with reference to the beings he has called into existence, and if from that point of view we were to contemplate the several tribes and species of animated beings that inhabit the earth, we might conceive of them as all animated by one will, performing a common service, conspiring, as the several limbs of our bodies do, to promote a common purpose. The conception of the cherub then is not an extravagant one, although it happens to be foreign from our usual modes of thought at the present day.

The "*wheels*" in the vision of the Prophet may be supposed to stand for the machinery or mechanism, the fixed laws, of the material universe, upon which all beings animate and inanimate depend. To even the most unphilosophical observer of nature this image might readily suggest itself. Even if the true system of nature were unknown, by which we are taught that the earth, instead of standing still as a central point, revolves contin-

ually on its own axis, and also round the sun, yet the idea of revolution of some kind would be constantly and necessarily suggested to the human mind. The interchange of day and night, occasioned by the diurnal appearance and disappearance of the great luminary, and the regular return of the several seasons, might be fitly represented by wheels regularly and perpetually turning. Moreover the vision of the Prophet represents "a wheel within a wheel," so arranged as to have a direction corresponding with the four faces of the living creatures, capable of running backward or forward, to one side or the opposite, according as the guiding spirit should direct. Under this symbol the Prophet's mind conceived the idea of God's omnipresence, an idea which we cannot understand fully, and which can only be represented by some such symbol as that contained in the vision. There was no need of the wheels in the vision turning. The movement was straight forward in any direction. So the Providence of God moves, hither and thither, constantly present, pervading all things, not performing its acts successively, one act at a time, but running swiftly in every direction and filling all places at once. The great idea of omnipresence which necessarily belongs to the Deity, which in our reasonings upon the Divine nature we cannot but ascribe to him, could not be better represented than it is in the vision of the Prophet, by the wheels, not actually running in different directions at the same time, which is inconceivable, but standing so arranged, as if they would and might. The symbol is as perfect as it can be.

The vision, furthermore, represents the wheels as "*full of eyes*," by which is set forth the omniscience of God. Everywhere in nature intelligence is apparent. The marks of design are exhibited wherever we turn our eyes. Even the slightest movement is guided by wisdom, and has a fixed purpose to serve. Nothing is left to chance; but all things are subject to the control and direction of an all-seeing mind. Moreover, the union of the four living creatures with the wheels in the vision may be supposed to stand for and represent the real union that exists among all the creatures of God. All subsist under one great head; all are subject to common laws; all acknowledge a common origin; all conspire in producing a common result; all are dependent upon a common care and oversight; all help to fulfil a common destiny; while at

the same time each has its separate and peculiar nature and sphere of action, and individual endowments.

Again, the vision represents "*the spirit of the living creatures in the wheels*," or, as the meaning seems to be, the same Divine Spirit which was in the living creatures, directing their motions, was also in the wheels, determining their movements. If we apply the symbol here made use of to what we see in the world, the lesson we are taught is that the same Divine intelligence and government that are evinced by living creatures, which are made to control and govern themselves, in some measure, by the intelligence which has been imparted to them from the Fountain of all intelligence, are also apparent in the material, inanimate parts of creation. Intelligence is everywhere discerned. The growth of plants, the ebb and flow of the ocean by its tides, the mechanical laws which govern the fall of heavy bodies to the earth, or the running of waters to find their level, the changes of the seasons, with their proportion of cold and heat, the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, with their attendant blessings of day and night, summer and winter, spring-time and harvest,—in short the whole mechanism of the universe evinces intelligence, design, providence, a guiding hand, a controlling will, a steady rule of action. All the movements in the universe, all the changes which we witness, are as constant, and as sure and precise and easy as if there were a separate soul lodged in each clod or stone or drop of water, or star in the firmament. It is as though the "*spirit of a living creature were in the wheels*," that turn to effect the great and beneficent changes of outward nature. Indeed, so apparent and so impressive is this order, this precision, and harmonious action of nature, that it has had the unfortunate effect upon some speculative minds to create a disbelief in any separate, independent, personal God. Nothing can be more absurd or comfortless than such a disbelief. And it is so contrary to the first principles of right reason, that it can never prevail widely. Strange indeed! (but so it has been sometimes) that the very marks of design and intelligence around us, instead of convincing men of the existence of a Great Being from whom all these laws originated, who arranged and fixed the order of events, should have the effect to lead any to question his existence. But it was not so with the

Prophet in his vision. For above the living creatures and above the wheels he sees the apparition of "*a throne*" encircled with flaming splendors, with a pavement of crystal, and seated on it was one who had a semblance of the human form, rendered indistinct by the excess of dazzling light with which he was surrounded; and from the throne there issued a voice, and at the sound of the voice the wheels stopped, and the living creatures "stood still and let down their wings." "This," the Prophet says, "was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." "And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard the voice of one who spoke."

Such was the vision which Ezekiel saw, when he was about to enter on his office as a Prophet of Jehovah. But some may say, it was no more than a creature of the Prophet's imagination. If we were to call it so, that would not destroy or affect the great ideas, conceptions, and truths set forth in the vision. We are made to speak in figures and to see visions. They help us to bring before the mind, and to make real and living the thoughts of the soul. We are not surely made to deal merely with abstractions, and to convey our thoughts and convictions to each other by means of algebraic signs. Abstract truth, the philosopher's truth, is important in its place. But practical men (and we are all called much more frequently to act as practical men than to think as philosophers,) need what may be called live truth. And the truth cannot be made "alive and powerful" by means of the analyzing, abstracting, generalizing intellect. This must be done through the imagination, which takes up the abstract speculations of the reasoning faculty, gives them form and body, and breathes into them a distinct personality. They are, so to speak, condensed from their intangible, impalpable, spiritual state, and changed into another form which can be seen and felt and realized; just as the winter's cold condenses the invisible air, which we know indeed to exist about us in a rarefied and invisible state, but which now through the influence of the frost glitters before our eyes, in the diamond drops that hang upon every tree and plant in nature. Is it not so with regard to moral and religious truth? The understanding may reason out, in a logical method, the truth, and arrive at the conclusion. But the imagination, by the help of figures,

imagery, symbols, presents this conclusion to the conscious soul in a shape which impresses it as a reality. It is not conceded in these remarks, that the vision which the Prophet saw was wholly his own creation, without any Divine aid; but only that the aid was furnished not to his intellect or reasoning faculty, but to his imagination, not with a view to prove the truths, so much as to impress more deeply upon the soul those truths which were already acknowledged. What were those truths? The being and supremacy and glory of God; the reality of a Divine Providence, superintending, controlling, governing all things and all creatures; the mutual connexion and the common dependence of all created beings. These were the chief truths conveyed to the Prophet's mind, and which may also be conveyed to our minds, by the vision.

And what in the case of the Prophet was the practical application to be made of the vision? What sentiments were designed to be excited in his soul by what he saw? Three sentiments,—reverence—trust—obligation. His reverence was elevated and strengthened by this exhibition of the glory and majesty of the Creator of the world. He saw him, with the mind's eye, elevated far above the most excellent of his creatures. The Prophet had before him a representation in a single picture of all that is most powerful, most beautiful, most fearful, most useful, most venerable, most impressive upon earth. And yet there was One above more mighty, more awful, more glorious than they all. How could he better have elevated his conceptions of God? How could he have brought before his consciousness a more vivid and lasting and practical conviction of the Great Being whose servant he was, and whose commission he was to execute? Another sentiment excited in his mind by the vision was trust—trust in that universal care, that beneficent Providence which is exercised over all creatures and all events. And lastly, the sentiment of obligation, the sentiment of duty, must have been strengthened in his soul by the vision.

And this is the practical operation of religion. There can be no true elevation of religious feeling, no clear and just conception of the majesty and glory of God, no sincere conviction of his paternal providence, without the conscience also being quickened. Whenever the sentiment of reverence is inspired, the sentiment of duty

will be strengthened. Such seems to be the law by which the principles and affections of the human soul act upon and strengthen each other. It was for this end that the vision was sent to the old Prophet. He had a solemn mission to perform, an important duty to discharge. He was prepared and furnished for his work by that exaltation of spirit which the vision of the Divine power and glory promoted. He felt anew, and as he had never felt before, the importance of his work, by realizing more fully than ever the perfections of the Being in whose service he was called to act. And is it not so with all moral beings? Is not the true way to inspire ourselves with the love of duty, first to bring before our minds a vision of the greatness and the goodness of that Almighty Being who created us originally, who conferred upon us the endowments of our nature, who placed us in this world, and assigned to us the sphere in which we are to act, and the duties we are to perform; that Being whose providence is our trust from day to day; and before whose dread tribunal the congregated spirits of all times must finally stand to give in their account? The vision of God which the mind sees by faith is designed to strengthen us in the discharge of duty.

W. P. L.

THE DOCTRINE OF HUMAN ACCOUNTABILITY.

A LETTER FROM A FRIEND.

IN your visit to me last September, you remember that the chief topic of conversation between us was, to what is owing the inefficiency of preaching? Is the pulpit as efficacious in good as it ought to be? Are the fruits of preaching equivalent to the labor expended? Whatever answer might be given to these and similar questions, one conclusion is plain, that the pulpit may be more useful than it now is,—that, indeed, it is beyond the bounds of our conception to know how much good may be accomplished by the instrumentality of the pulpit.

It was suggested on the one hand, that the doctrine of human sinfulness was not sufficiently enforced; that all preaching was to begin, indeed, upon the presumption that man was a sinner, that as

such he was "lost," that he needed redemption and orgiveness and that no man could arrive at single-hearted and fervent piety, who did not feel himself a sinner, lost, unless he could experience redemption and forgiveness. On the other hand it was suggested, that there was too much vague preaching upon human sinfulness and on piety in general; that the community had been taught to make too wide a distinction between piety and goodness; that what our Saviour taught was, moral excellence; that the community had been injured, its moral standard degraded, and the religious portion of the community distracted, by making religion the end, and by not making it the means of goodness; and that, finally, the duty of the preacher was, to set forth moral excellence as the object of the soul, and religion as the means by which it was to be obtained, religion the motive by which men were bound to seek it.

Without entering further into this discussion, or deciding whether it may not be that we were equally right, I wish now to suggest to you another reason why preaching is not so efficacious as the community have reason to demand that it should be; viz: indefinite views concerning human accountability.

The views of future punishment which have prevailed through the community until within a few years have been distinct, but not spiritual. Preachers used once to dwell upon fear alone as a motive to repentance. They described in precise terms the condition of the impenitent sinner in another world. They dwelt upon the figurative language of the Scriptures, enlarged upon it, exaggerated it, spoke many unwarrantable things concerning future punishment, and sometimes drew for facts upon an imagination divested of benevolence and justice.

The result has been a reaction. The Universalist denomination has sprung up, admitting indeed a just retribution, but denying, for the most part, a retribution beyond the grave, and the Restorationist has maintained that punishment is remedial only, that it must of necessity work out its intended object, and that it will at some time hereafter come to an end.

But the reaction has not been confined to other denominations: it has extended to our own. Some pronounce fear an unworthy motive, and wish that the preacher should address his hearers only with the motive, that God so *loved* the world, that he sent his Son

to redeem it; and they call for more vivid illustrations of that infinite goodness, which created the human soul at first, and which cannot desert it throughout the endless ages of eternity. Others believe only in the retributions of the conscience; its stings are man's only punishment, peace of mind man's only reward; conscience is the voice of God, its retributions are his judgments; they are so in this world, and in the next they are the only judgment to which man is exposed. Such ideas they think reason teaches; and by them they think to warn the sinner sufficiently, and fully to justify the goodness of God.

In reference to the motive of fear, however, although the truly good may not need it, although the hearts of the bad are often overcome by the tenderness of love, it is plainly a motive used by Christ, and used continually by him. It is said that the world is selfish, that men are depraved; we know, too, that many are wicked. By what other motive than the fear of future accountability can we address the selfish, the depraved, the wicked? If we endeavor to move them by representations of the beauty of virtue, they laugh at us: virtue is an abstraction with them; they deny its existence, and deal only with realities. If we lay before them the retributions of conscience, they have felt them immeasurably more keenly than we can describe them: they know the power of them; know also how to escape them. The retributions of conscience have been no motive thus far to repentance, and seem rather a "prophecy" of punishment than an actual retribution.

Perhaps no man, who has himself felt the power of temptation and the burden of sin, and has felt also singleness of heart in desiring purity and piety, does not feel also that the thought of future accountability is the doctrine which meets his want. Other motives are feeble: he has *presumed* upon the goodness of God, the beauty of virtue fades before the fire of his passions, and it is only when he feels the infinite importance, the absolute and unqualified necessity for righteousness, that he can bring back his heart to its duties and its God. Who is there, that feels himself weak and sinful, that does not wish in an equal degree to reverence more deeply the justice, as well as to admire the goodness of God?

To maintain that the retributions of conscience are that future judgment of which the Scripture speaks, seems to me to do away

with the doctrine of accountability to God, and the infinite obligations of duty. I say, infinite obligations ; for an obligation, which is not infinite, loses the very essence of an obligation. A motive may admit of measure : man cannot be *obliged* by that which he can live to the end of, or which, while it lasts, he has power to endure. The retributions of conscience may be *motives* ; but he who expects no other judgment is responsible to himself alone. If the fear of God is salutary, he is not responsible to God ; at least since he can despise the stings of conscience, he is responsible only to a God whom he can treat with neglect and whose judgments he can bear.

If these remarks are true, it may be found upon reflection that the community need clearer views upon the subject of future judgment. What is the force of Scripture language in reference to it ? Has man the subject, man the sinner, any right, after having sinned, to propose his retribution, to decide that it will come to an end ? The force of Scripture language, and the instruction of reason, on the subject, appear to me to be this ;—that the Divine Being will call the soul of man to account hereafter ; that Infinite Justice will enter *personally* upon a reckoning with man for the life which he has lived,—for sins for which no excuse can be invented, for which no atonement could be made,—for virtues, which he who has practised, has done no more than his duty ; that every man, both the good and the bad, will, at judgment before his Maker, be conscious of the *personal presence of God* ; and that man, when that personal presence is revealed, can trust for judgment only to Infinite Justice ; that repentance is the only ground of the sinner's acceptance, and that the Divine Being receives with infinite kindness the repentant, who seek to love and to obey him. Do we know any thing beyond ? do we need to know any thing beyond ? Need the *repentant* fear to trust themselves to Infinite Justice ? And what hope does Scripture suggest to others ?

What if we could but apply to our daily conduct, to the constant procession of thought and feeling, the idea of the decision of Infinite Purity and Infinite Justice ! Who, now, will enter into reckoning with his Maker ? Who wishes to hide the thought of reckoning, and to meet it unprepared ?

The community at large surely needs something for its redemption. We cannot tell the amount of unhappiness which is everywhere diffused around us. Can the doctrine of accountability be taught, rationally taught? Is it the *one great doctrine*, revealed in Scripture, reflected forever in conscience? Has he learned all necessary truth, who feels as he ought to feel that he shall render in an account to God, infinitely *just*, infinitely good? And is it of use for the community to believe in a being, whose goodness is indulgence, and whose justice is carelessness for the moral characters of his children? Shall the community be taught such views concerning the future, as declare not the justice, but the cruelty of God, and his disregard of man? Men are alienated from preaching: they are sometimes disgusted, sometimes they laugh. We need truth. Happy is he, sublimely happy, who feels in the fulness of his soul that he has attained it, who looks up to a Being whose truth and purity and justice forever solemnise his feelings, and whose goodness saves him from grovelling fear. E. B.

RICHES.

A SERMON, BY REV. GEORGE F. SIMMONS.

PROVERBS xi. 28. He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

God has ordered, that man in the sweat of his face shall eat bread. It is by labor, that we obtain means to satisfy hunger and supply our other natural wants. But in the present state of civilized society how easily for the most part is this done; and after having labored for the food which is convenient for us, how much leisure remains for more direct satisfactions. "The hay appeareth, and the tender grass showeth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered: the lambs are for thy clothing; and the goats are the price of thy field; and thou shalt have goat's milk enough for thy food, and for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance of thy maidens." In most conditions, a competence is not

difficult to acquire. Bread, and a roof, and fire, and a friend, a few books, and clothing from the weather, these may be had by most with little exertion; and how small is the superiority which riches have over these!

Can riches save us from the ills that life inherits, or prepare us for its end? The appliances of luxury, the displays of opulence, the contrivances to heighten or prolong pleasure, if they really add to the happiness of existence, make a death-bed more hard. If they cover up the dissatisfactoriness of our mortal state and spread a false glitter over the things of this world, if they pamper pride and the lust of pleasure, or deceive us into trusting to themselves, they herein harm us fatally; for they render us unprepared for our inevitable lot. Riches cannot keep us from the grave; nor can they follow us beyond it. There they fall from us like water, and are hardly able to mitigate the pains which attend our departure. Naked we came into the world, and naked we shall depart hence. One "dieth in bitterness of soul, and hath never tasted pleasure;" another "dieth in the fulness of his prosperity, being wholly at ease and quiet." "Alike they lie down in the dust, and the worms cover them." And if riches tend to conceal from me this my inevitable doom, by giving variety to pleasure and sharpening the edge of appetite, if they tend to weaken my fortitude and manliness, or make my state of mind less spiritual, then let them be for me forever accursed, and place me with the pious poor who do not fear to die. Since this is the end of all men, it may justly be required, that every condition be such as not to hide that reality from view, nor render us less prepared to meet it; and that certainly is the preferable lot, which sends us to the gates of death best furnished for what lies within them. And in this respect riches have no advantage over poverty. The owner of cities is not privileged to a more Christian death than the beggar. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches; but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life."

Riches cannot last, nor can they prolong life; neither can they increase greatly our enjoyments while they and life continue. The ills that flesh is heir to, sickness and pain, anxiety and bereavement, visit the curtained chamber, as well as the cabin in the woods, and perhaps are aggravated by the enervating influences of luxury. The sweetest slumbers are on beds of straw. In the slippery shrouds, sleep, nature's soft nurse, seals the wet sea-boy's eyes, while the monarch wails wakefully under his canopy of silk. It is doubtful even, whether the pleasures of sense are enhanced by opulence; for while the rich have the finer supplies, the poor bring the keener relish. Temperance, the mother of health, sits down at the frugal table of the poor; and labor banishes the seeds of disease. But these advantages of opposite conditions are not determining. We all know well, and well enough, that happiness is drawn from deeper sources, having its reservoir in the heart; that the temptations of each condition may be withstood; that each condition brings its discipline, and offers its encouragement to virtue and to heaven. These are what we should desire to arrive at; and there is nothing else truly worthy of pursuit. Before the riches of our spiritual natures, all other wealth is obscured; and in prospect of the joys held up to our view in heaven, the delights of this world become insignificant. Of what value to me is wealth, while I am walking on my pilgrimage towards the abode of angels and of God? Can any thing attract my high admiration, which has an existence so limited, and an advantage so doubtful? My wants are already satisfied. Nature pours forth her bounties at my feet; and I am much more anxious to use these with temperance, than to take to myself a larger share. Is a finer dress, or a more beautiful dwelling, or are carriages and servants, worth the cost of getting them, or even the care and vexation which their possession will devolve upon me? If I would be rich, I must turn from many loved pursuits, and engage in enterprises which will contract my sympathies and withdraw my attention from Heaven. Even were the world eternal, this would seem loss rather than gain; and with heaven in view, riches, for themselves, seem hardly worth having, even though they should cost much less.

If happiness consist in satisfaction of desire, the wealthy are often the least likely to attain it. For desires grow with indulgence,

and there is no bound to their demands. He that has seen much of the world will have met with men who spend fortunes and yet feel themselves pinched, who roll in wealth and yet whose insatiable imaginations are ever discontentedly roaming on what even they cannot buy. It behoves us to chasten and repress these extravagant and wild affections; and since satisfaction consists in wishes being squared with gratification, to accomplish the end in another way, in the only way in which it is feasible, by keeping our wishes down to the level of our fortune, by lusting for nothing which we may not have, and by living contentedly and humbly under the providential care of God. In this, as in everything, our happiness is to proceed not from outward abundance, but from self-denial and self-control. These are the secret springs of true wealth, of that worldly wealth even which consists in the enjoyment of outward things. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase. This also is vanity." "There is a sore evil, which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt." To their hurt they are too apt to be sought, to be held, and to be outlaid. The whole process,—the acquisition, the hoarding, and the application,—is not unfrequently such as to corrupt the character. They can confer no surpassing pleasure. They are in themselves no signal advantage. But it is also true, that in the hands of a wise man they may be made to minister to what is better. We therefore turn our thoughts into another channel, and seek to bring to mind the uses for which wealth is desirable.

In the first place, the pursuit of money may be an ennobling pursuit, when we have entered into obligations which we have not means to fulfil, and others' just demands are postponed by our deficiencies. Our promises must ever be sacred to us. An activity which we would not apply to our own aggrandizement we must cheerfully engage in, in order to repay them to whom we are indebted; and nothing which we have is ours, except by charity and sufferance, until they have received in full what is due to them. That sacred sense of a promise, which is so exposed to corruption in these tempting times of ours, the man of honor will labor to keep pure and brilliant in his heart, and he will give himself with the greatest industry to his calling, in order that this may receive

no taint; for this is an honor to which the pistol-bullet will bring no antidote; it must, like all other virtues, be kept white by self-denial and submission to the laws of justice. But remember all the while, that God is your greatest creditor, to whom you owe love and obedience and continual prayer; and that that deep debt, which nought can cancel or diminish, remains unpaid, when you make yourself the bond-slave of the counting-room or the farm. Your creditors may command your body; but they have no right to crush your soul, nor to cause you to disobey the least of God's commands. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Let busy industry, family cares, the pride of honor, all enterprise and occupation be subservient to religion, and with religion let them be filled.

Again, whatever is necessary for the reasonable comfort and Christian state of one's family one is justified, and required, to endeavor to supply. "If any provide not for those of his own house, he is worse than an infidel." Christianity throws no shield over the drones of society, but encourages us, with a meek sense of dependence on Providence, without wearing anxiety or doubt of his all-wise care, to seek food and raiment and shelter for them that are dependent on us, leading them to temperance and moderation in all things, and pointing them to Him who feeds the raven.

But there are advantages in moderate riches, which I have not yet enumerated. It is an advantage to be independent,—to be safe from being cast upon the mercies of the hard-hearted, upon the charities of them who give with reluctance, or with insult. It is a great privilege, not to be burdensome in sickness and old age to those who would reproach us with our helplessness, nor to forfeit our self-respect by any compulsory dependence, nor fetter the native freedom of thought and word by fear of a superior's frown. A man will not willingly yield himself to such dependence, until he have lost the spirit of a man.

And again, wealth is desirable as a means of beneficence. The mutual dependences of society are part of the order of Providence; the miseries of the poor are often undeserved; and to minister to their necessities is often one of the sweetest uses of prosperity. To see the sick pauper, stretched on his hard bed, without nurse or

fire, without medicine or food, in solitary and unconsolated wretchedness, to see this without being able to administer any relief, is heart-rending. To see the famished mother, made desperate by want, seek to dispel her crowding troubles by intoxication, to see her children growing up in squalid wickedness to be pests and demons in the community, without being able to bring any effectual help, would be a source of deep distress. Among the straits and temptations of poverty the opulent have the privilege of bringing refreshment and protection; and who that has a heart does not feel it a blessing to be followed by the benediction of the widow that was ready to perish, to change the premature paleness of the orphan to a sunny cheek and smile once more, and to save by timely aid her who would soon have sold her virtue for bread? The establishment and support, also, of institutions for the relief and care of the destitute is a worthy object for which to covet the gifts of fortune. To possess blessings, in short, in order to impart them is a generous desire, and he that soweth thus shall reap a harvest in heaven.

And, once more, riches are not to be despised, inasmuch as they furnish means for the culture of our minds, and the minds of our children. They supply us with books, with teachers, with the apparatus of science; they relieve us from the necessity of exhausting toil, give us the means of comfort and repose, and the opportunity of engaging in intellectual pursuits. They enable us to travel, and view the institutions and customs and arts of foreign nations, to mingle widely with society, and study at large the characters of men, to visit the remains of ancient times, the sacred localities of Palestine. Hereby wealth may be made serviceable to what is best in us, and not for itself, but for these uses, may claim a better estimation than to be valued at simply nothing. Indeed Prudence may sum up her exhortation in the words of one who has been thought wise: "Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly; yet have no abstract or friarly contempt of them."

To you, Christians, therefore, do we say, that for such excellent ends as have now been mentioned, riches, or even opulence, may be valued and sought. But sought for these ends, it is evident

that it will be sought with moderation and innocence. Being disinterested in our intention and aim, we shall not pursue it with passionate eagerness; and we shall not be guilty of the folly of losing the end in struggling after the means. We shall not throw ourselves headlong into the jaws of traffic, to gather the means of enlarging our minds, which we thus wilfully contract. Our purpose and aim will sanctify our whole occupation. That will no longer be demeaning, which has been undertaken with magnanimity. In all parts of the work we shall have a heavenly home before us, and shall frequently consider Him who governeth affairs. We shall not "trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." "For he that trusteth in his riches shall fall; but the righteous shall flourish as a branch."

DEWEY'S DISCOURSES ON HUMAN LIFE.*

THE Author of these discourses offers them to his people, whom he is leaving "for an absence of two years in Europe," having collected them out of the many he has delivered, chiefly because they pertain to the same general subject, though not a series, being "written mostly without any reference to each other." They make the fourth volume that we have from the same pen, beside other discourses and tracts. And whatever else may be thought, we imagine no one regrets that Dr. Dewey publishes so much, though we may well marvel how he can spare so much. This volume has more interest for us than either of the others except the first, which will long stand as one of the very first in the language. No man's writings are more his own, than Mr. Dewey's. If the thoughts are not original—and they are more so than those of most sermon-writers, at the least—the whole style and plan are peculiar. The style indeed is so peculiar, and in one sense so monotonous, that we could not tolerate it in any one else, and sometimes become a little weary of it here. It is the fashion of

* Discourses on Human Life. By Orville Dewey, Pastor of the Church of the Messiah in New York. David Felt & Co. 1841. pp. 300, 12mo.

the day to say that every man is right, who is only 'true to himself;' which seems often to mean that he must not change any thing in himself or his ways, even for the better. With some contempt for this cant, and all respect for our elder brother, the writer, we do think his style would divert attention less from the thought and the man, if the first person were less used, and a few expressions which now occur in almost every page were less frequent. And having ventured to criticise the writer, we must relieve conscience by saying a word for the publisher; viz. that such discourses deserve a better dress and more comely face, than they bear in this volume or in either of its predecessors.*

It is on the subject, more than the book, that we are desirous of offering a few remarks. What greater subject is there than Human Life, in its religious aspect and religious use? Ably is it presented here in most of its phases; and it is the great excellence of the volume, and a rare excellence, that it deals with Life. That it should be rare, is sad; yet is it true, that most sermons and nearly all theology relate far more to theory than to actual life. A really practical sermon, not in the low and outward sense, but in the deep and inward application, is an exception. And we believe it the great reason, why so many in our congregations, particularly men, are so little interested. Most of the doctrines and explanations, opinions and theories, which to students and preachers seem very important, are to common minds very unimportant and tedious. Shall the preaching then be confined to one class of subjects,—the common duties, the petty cares, and mere moralities of life? No. That is far from our meaning; though we are free to say, it were better to keep to these every-day concerns, than to keep wholly to those which belong to the schools and the books. Why be restricted to either? Why may we not, should we not, deal chiefly with those principles and obligations which involve all duty, which go deeper than any mere morality, and yet allow no morality or im-

* We think our friend might have spoken more strongly on this point. It is unpardonable that the best volumes of sermons of the present time should be printed in such poor style. If the New York press cannot execute better work, we trust Dr. Dewey's future discourses will be sent to publishers in Boston, who would be ashamed to issue such a volume as this before us.

morality to escape? There is a fact that teaches much on this point, both for preaching and living. When Christ was asked by a young man, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" the answer was, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And the commandments are specified, "Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother, and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." And the only requirement added to these is in fact but an interpretation and application of the last, and is enjoined as a test of sincerity by the necessities of the time. Some test all times require, and such a test as can be given by no profession, by no creed or form, but only by the life.

The great want, the great work, of speaker and hearer, of the Church and the community, not least at the present day and in our own community, is to carry religion into life, and show and feel that it is life, and not death,—the present life, the inward life and the outward, the practical, the spiritual, the whole life. It is to be remembered, as is shown in the first two discourses of the volume before us, that all life has a "moral significance," that "everything in life is moral." And again in three connected discourses near the close, we are taught the "identity of religion with goodness, and with a good life." Now it is vain to turn away from such subjects and such intimations with the poor talk, that it is only 'good works,' 'common morality.' There has been too much of this talk in the Church, and it may have had no small influence in leading some, even Christians, to conduct which has not the merit of good works or common morality. It is a mournful fact, that the denunciations of religion have always been directed more at heresies than at vices. And not in the Church alone. In society also, and by men of the world, bad conduct is held to be more venial than great error. The heretic, the unbeliever, the visionary, the extravagant reformer, are handled more severely, are more likely to be shunned and condemned, than the liar, the knave, the polite hypocrite, or the bold adulterer. There is too little charity for differing opinions, and too much for evil courses; or rather, a wrong kind, a charity that confounds moral distinctions, that thinks to improve an offender by giving him special countenance, and seeks

to cover a multitude of sins without the attempt to reform, or the courage to utter the truth. It is singular that so many who deify truth, and clamor for reform, and complain of a dead Church, and a stationary or insufficient Christianity, are far from insisting on the high, the searching, the uncompromising precepts of this religion, and are less troubled by violations of its perfect moral code than by enormities of doctrine or the show of authority.

We are all prone to forget, often as we repeat it in words, that religion, whatever its foundation, whatever its name, pretence, or humility, if it be *religion*, must dwell in the soul and govern the life. Religion is character. Search for the truth, examine doctrines, respect institutions and ordinances, use forms, means, all actual helps—we would slight none of them, we think their importance more frequently held in too low than too high esteem—but do not forget, that their whole value has relation to character, their whole influence is to fall upon the soul and the life; and upon the soul as it throws itself into the life, as it manifests and tries itself there, fanning the flame of its piety by diligent action, expanding its power and elevating its aim by habitual exercise. Religion is character; and character must be formed in life. It cannot be formed in death, it cannot be formed in the temple. It may receive impulse in the temple, the best impulse, light from above, conviction, resolution, strength. It may be deeply affected in death, may be changed, and brought into a state of preparation for pardon and acceptance. But this can hardly be called character, unless it be tried and proved in life. Not necessarily in the world's tumult or out-door conflict, but in the discipline of the heart and the experience of the inward and actual life. How singular the idea, that to place religion in this is dangerous, because it is mere life, mere character! As if any thing else were so essential as character, or any thing so difficult to order aright, to control always, and raise to the high Christian mark. We are forced to smile, while really we mourn, to hear men speak of a *cross* in connection with some doctrine or form, or mode of a doctrine or form, while the due regulation of the heart, the government of the tongue and temper and passions, is thought to be no cross and is treated as of little worth. Thus, to believe in total depravity, or to submit to immersion, is often urged as a test of humility, and

proof of willingness to take up the cross of Christ. How easy then to be a Christian! A doctrine, a profession, an ordinance—it is absolutely nothing, compared with the moral conflicts sustained and the spiritual victories gained by many, in the retirement of the family, the struggle of life, or the secrecy of the breast. This is well illustrated by a single passage of this volume of Discourses. "You are a parent; and you give a command or make a request. A thoughtful observer will perceive the very tone of it to be moral; and a friend may know that it has cost twenty years of self-discipline to form that gentle tone." Such self-discipline is the great purpose of life, the great work of religion. "Keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

Often does the question come to us—what is a religious use of life? If we change slightly the terms, and ask, what is a wise use of life, few would find it difficult to answer. It must be wise, to use life for the greatest good to ourselves and others which it is capable of yielding. And this cannot be done, it cannot be even known, until all the relations of life are known and regarded, especially its duration, its destiny. These then must be studied, as the first and simplest wisdom. And with these all the uses of life must be made to harmonize. If you are mortal and only mortal, eat, drink, for tomorrow you die. But if you have a mind capable of infinite growth, a heart which thirsts for that which the world cannot give, a conscience that is its own tormentor or rewarder according as it is used, and must so continue indefinitely, if you are living a life always exposed to death, yet nursing in its own bosom the seeds of immeasurable happiness or misery, seeds sown by your own hand day by day—then *it is wise* to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world," and such words are no longer unmeaning. Nor is it a worthless consideration, though a low principle of action, that a good life can lose nothing, and may gain everything; while wickedness or infidelity has no advantage, and perils all. 'What will be your condition,' said the young scoffer to the poor, suffering, aged Christian, 'what will be your condition, Father, without another life?' 'What will be your condition with it?' was the reply.

We have not meant to write an article on Dr. Dewey's volume, but having expressed our satisfaction with its contents, we shall per-

haps best recommend it to our readers by giving the titles of the Discourses. They are well chosen, and indicate the importance of the discussions here presented. They are as follows. "1. On the Moral Significance of Life. 2. That every thing in Life is Moral. 3. Life considered as an Argument for Faith and Virtue. 4. Life is, what we make it. 5. On Inequality in the Lot of Life. 6. On the Miseries of Life. 7. On the School of Life. 8. On the Value of Life. 9. Life's Consolation in view of Death. 10. The Problem of Life revolved in the Life of Christ. 11. On the Shortness of Life. 12. Reflections at the Close of Day. 13. Religion considered as the great Sentiment of Life. 14. On the Religion of Life. 15. 16. 17. On the Identity of Religion with Goodness, and with a Good Life. 18. On the Call of Humanity, and the Answer to it."

E. B. H.

TO MY WIFE;

ON HER FIFTIETH BIRTH-DAY.

WHEN summer from the hills departs,
 And summer woods begin to fade,
 The birds which in their leafy boughs
 So long had richest music made,
 By the first breath of winter warned,
 Fly to some distant, summer land,
 Where the green earth perennial blooms,
 And airs and skies are ever bland.

So when youth's summer years go by,
 And riper, soberer years come on,
 The joys of that fair, earlier time
 Take flight and vanish, one by one.
 Dear ones who filled the shades of life
 With one perpetual, happy song,
 Fly to a higher, heavenly realm,
 And there their notes of bliss prolong.

Thy birth-day, dearest, well may speak
 Of those, most dear, who once were ours,
 Whose words made music to our hearts,
 More sweet than birds in summer bowers;
 Now gone to no far earthly clime,
 But to a blessed heaven above,
 Where time and death no more have power,
 Where God infolds them with His love.

Returning birth-days, like a low,
 Sweet voice descending from the sky,
 Teach us how swift our days and years
 Glide past—their final goal how nigh.
 Oh! may we hear those blessed tones,
 Which win us to their pure abode,—
 And with a faithful heart prepare
 To meet with them and dwell with God.

M.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS AT HOME.

FROM LETTERS TO AN ABSENT DAUGHTER.

* * * LAST sabbath, the first of your absence from home, we went to church as usual, except that you went not with us, and listened to a discourse which to all of us seemed of uncommon excellence, while we differed considerably in opinion respecting the cause of its peculiar impressiveness. Your brother C——, who still continues to cultivate his acquaintance with Hebrew and to keep his eye upon the clerical profession, gave it as his opinion that much of the interest of the discourse was owing to the new and encouraging meaning given to old and familiar words—the words of the text, and partly also to the classic and chaste taste exhibited in the composition. Your sister thought the discourse peculiarly impressive, because the subject—the beneficial effects of realizing the presence of God—was solemn, practical, affecting. I thought it peculiarly excellent, perhaps because I was all the while wishing that you were present to hear it, and regretting much

that you could not have heard it before you left forever the paternal roof. I thought it would have been quite a treasure to have my dear M—— carry with her ; this, perhaps, was the reason why I was more attentive to, and pleased with, this discourse than I usually am on common occasions. Your mother, after hearing all these various explanations or hypotheses, said that probably there was no other reason for the peculiar impressiveness of the discourse in question than the peculiarly saddened and subdued state of our own feelings, from having just parted with you, and from seeing your accustomed seat and place in meeting differently occupied. Pray, let us know to which of these explanations you incline to give the preference ; and no evasions, M——, by saying we are all right, all our theories are good and partly true ; but let us have your opinion, with the frankness and the independence you always exhibited when with us.

But I set out, not to give you an account of our opinions or feelings, but to give you some idea of the substance of the discourse, particularly of its introduction. Mr. W—— introduced his remarks by a narrative somewhat as follows. He said that a young man who had acquired some knowledge of Hebrew—the original language of the book in which his text (Genesis xvii. 1,) was found—and who was cultivating an acquaintance with that language chiefly for his own improvement and for the satisfaction of his own mind as to passages of doubtful or disputed interpretation, in the course of his regular progress through the book of Genesis came to the passage which he had at this time chosen as his text. He said he would not in the pulpit state at large the reasons why that young man came to the conclusion, that the meaning of the original was neither fully nor fairly expressed in the words of our Authorized Version, knowing that explanations of the grammatical or philological peculiarities or idioms of the language would be neither interesting nor instructive to a miscellaneous audience. The result however to which the young student arrived, after his examination of the words of the text, was this, that the meaning of the original would have been much more nearly given or conveyed to the English reader, had the words been translated thus—‘ Walk before me, (or conduct thyself as if in my immediate presence,) and thou shalt become perfect, (or thou shalt go on unto

perfection.') In this interpretation, Mr. W—— said, he was inclined unqualifiedly to agree. He stated further, that thus rendered, he considered these words of Jehovah to Abraham as the most plain and explicit declaration in all Scripture, of the purifying and perfecting tendency of keeping in active operation upon the mind a sense of the Divine presence and omniscience.

Having left upon our minds the impression, that the latter clause of the words of Jehovah in the text did not contain a precept, but a promise—that the true rendering would be, not 'and be perfect', but 'and thou shalt become perfect,' and having insisted on the importance of the proposition or promise, Mr. W—— went on to say something farther regarding that young biblical scholar to whom he professed himself indebted for the proper interpretation of the words of his text as they stand in the original language. Knowing as you do our excellent pastor's early devotion to study and to self-improvement, it will undoubtedly occur to you, as it did to myself during his continuation of the narrative, that the young man, a chapter of whose history he was giving us, was no other than himself. But this is anticipating. He went on, then, to say that this young man having ardent desires after self-amelioration and perfection, and certain impressions also, previously to his making out this new version of the Hebrew text, of the advantages of keeping up an ever-operative impression of the presence of God, and of the subserviency thereof to progress in goodness, growth in all moral excellence and advancement in Christian character and a divine life, this new rendering, which seemed decidedly the one primarily intended, had deepened and rendered tenfold more impressive all his previous impressions and experience upon the subject. The result of this fresh impression of a great truth upon his mind was, that he earnestly and perseveringly devoted himself to do as God had commanded Abraham,—to conduct himself habitually and in all things as if really in the immediate presence and under the most intimate inspection of the heart-searching Omniscient and Omnipresent. This attempt Mr. W—— did not represent as having been at first altogether successful. Had he done so, I should have suspected that he had been greatly misinformed, or that he knew nothing personally about the matter. You, and probably every one else who has made the same attempt,

would give a representation of your experience somewhat as Mr. W—— stated that of his young friend to have been. He stated that, though earnest, he found it very difficult, and generally impossible, to keep up a sense of God's presence throughout a *whole* day; and that though his attempts to acquire a habit of 'walking before God' or as if in His immediate presence were sustained uninterruptedly for a very considerable length of time, yet that he had to confess that even at the end of these prolonged attempts the business and the turmoil of life did often cause most grievous failures, and that at best his obedience to the precept of the text was but a feeble and oft-interrupted obedience. Notwithstanding however all the imperfections of his obedience, the experience of this young Christian brought him acquainted with so much serenity and satisfaction of mind, as well as consciousness of 'growth in grace' and progress towards perfection, that he could not think himself presumptuous in saying that his experience warranted him to add his testimony to the truth of the promise in the latter clause of the text,—that walking before God will contribute to progress and perfection. He had found that his imperfect obedience had yielded him a rich reward—that it had been eminently productive of virtue, piety, peace.

And what, think you, was uppermost in the mind of your sad and sorrowing father? It was a wish, a desire, a prayer that *you*, of whom I felt as though bereaved forever, that you, my dear M——, might often engage in similar attempts, and that *your* experience might enable you to bear a similar corroborative testimony. The memory of those days rushed spontaneously upon my mind, in which I knew you had endeavored so to act in all things as would have secured to you, had they known of it, the approbation of your highly esteemed friends Dr. H——, and Prof. S——. I prayed that now, when you were removed from the counsel and the guardianship of home, you might find, in obedience to this precept of God to Abraham and its promised and blissful results, an ample and sufficient substitute for all that you have left. *I prayed*, my daughter; and as prayers are little worth without *corresponding exertions*, I have penned the above in the hope that it may, in some degree, contribute to the accomplishment of my prayer.

T. C. A.

LUNT'S "CHRISTIAN PSALTER."*

THE psalm-book is the liturgy of our Congregational churches. It is the only fixed and printed form, in which they express their devotions. While in other communions the prayers are repeated after the model of ancient appointment, and perhaps an undeviating ritual marks out the whole order of religious service, with us nothing remains in a prescribed shape but the holy Scriptures,—that unchangeable word, and the psalms that we sing. These sacred songs are, on that account, of the greater consequence to us. They indicate in some degree the doctrine that is professed among us as a body of Christian worshippers. They exhibit the feelings, which we seek to cultivate on the great subjects of faith and duty. They embody the religious spirit, which we would have prevail in our assemblies. They are some sign too, as well as aid, of its purity, fervour, and intelligent progress. Associated as they steadily are with the solemn offices of the sanctuary, they partake, in a manner, of the reverence which attaches itself to the service-book in other churches. The old hymn sounds like sacred writ, resembling the familiar prayers, which are said to acquire a deeper interest the oftener they are recited. And not only are "these for song in the house of the Lord, and for the service of the house of God," but their lines dwell in the memory, go home with us, and belong to all places. They are read by the young, whose tender minds they impress. They are treasured by the old, whose early sensibilities they awaken afresh. The introduction, therefore, into any church of a new collection of pieces, designed for such a use and capable of such an influence, is a subject not only of very lively interest, but of grave importance. While that part of our sacred exercises with which they are inseparably connected is considerable for the attention it requires and the time it takes, and to some is a principal attraction and delight of those exercises, they themselves give it meaning and contribute its chief value. They do not a little to mould those devotional sentiments,

* The Christian Psalter ; A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for Social and Private Worship. Boston : Little & Brown. 1841. pp. 704, 12mo.

which they propose to utter in speech and musical sounds. Their moral effect, though it may be much heightened by the skill of the singer and choral harmonies, depends mainly upon their own merits, as compositions of this peculiar kind. They ought to impress the mind devoutly even in their silent reading, without so much as a tone of the human voice. At the same time, they are made to be sung. That calling of theirs should never be forgotten. They should have a movement accordingly. They should be of a lyrical character. They are not short poems merely, of however beautiful a structure, of however pious a strain. They must be adapted to a certain end. They have a special design, of which they cannot lose sight without forfeiting their ecclesiastical place. We are convinced that the full value of this part of our helps to devotion is not yet appreciated; and that there may come from our hymn-books a voice of persuasion and power to affect profoundly the heart.

The title of that which has given occasion to this article, "The Christian Psalter," suggests the idea, how greatly we are indebted to the royal psalmist for the poetry and music of our churches. For the poetry, his genius framed the first models; and his zealous diligence arranged the first institution, so far as history informs us, that has sent down as it were its harmonies through all generations. It carries back our thoughts to that remote era, when King David wrote and sang; and presided over those whom he trained to do likewise; and ordained the method, by which the praises of the Lord should be sounded through the wide courts of the temple that was yet to be built. It tempts us to make mention, in this respect, of the debt of gratitude which the world will be owing forever to one of its most illustrious names. Illustrious especially for what was least thought of perhaps in his own day, when the splendour of his victories and dominion threw everything else into shadow, but is now his chief title to fame. He was "the sweet singer of Israel;" and that has proved to be more than his crown or sword. The harp of the minstrel-boy was more powerful than the sling with which he smote down the giant. After it had charmed away the evil spirit from Saul, it continued to pour a divine spell over the adoring and sorrowing hearts of all succeeding ages. It struck the key-note for the worship of the world. It has led and attuned the

tribute of countless congregations in countless tongues, down to the present hour. While his laurels faded as soon as any others, and his empire was as frail as the rest of the principalities of the earth, his psalms, the immortal treasury of devotional poetry, become more honoured than ever by an accumulation of eulogies and blessed effects, and by showing their superiority yet to everything in the same kind that the labouring spirit of man has attempted. They are the language of the asking heart, under all public and private circumstances. They raised round them, while their author still lived, a band of heavenly companions warmed with the same inspiration, and sharing in the same beneficent offices to mankind. They have been made the subjects of learned comment, and the themes of humblest admiration, all round the globe. Some of them were prepared for the ceremonies of the national worship, and were accompanied with all the musical art which was known in those early days. We read that the king organized whole companies, "who should prophesy with cymbals, psalteries and harps;" so that "the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the Lord, was two hundred, fourscore and eight." Such an institute, the first of which we any where hear, was brought to such perfection by the master-hand. "He praised the Holy One most high," says the Son of Sirach, "with words of glory. With his whole heart he sung, and loved Him that made him. He set singers also before the altar, that by their voices they might make sweet melody, and daily sing praises in their songs."

When we open the New Testament, we find the psalms of David mentioned with the utmost distinction by our Lord himself; and where they are not mentioned, their use is implied, in the most impressive connexion with the events that were taking place. When the disciples sang a hymn together, on the evening of the last Passover, its words were chanted from that primitive collection. And when the Apostles in prison sang till their fetters dropped, it was probably from the same fountain that they drew the expressions of their resolute cheer, and poured them out from their full affections.

But after this, those ancient strains, full as they were, were not sufficient. Another dispensation, a train of unheard of wonders,

the introduction of further knowledge and a freer spirit and a richer covenant and "everlasting righteousness," must celebrate in other modes, if after the same general pattern, the needs of the soul and the benignity of its Creator. The events of a diviner history were to be rehearsed. The temper of a more loving commandment was to be breathed. The glory of a celestial promise was to be depicted. "Come, let us sing unto the Lord a *new song*," was the necessary call from a new spiritual era; and the song was set in the name of the Son of David.

The Psalter must now be Christian. We might infer that this would soon happen, from the nature of the case. But we have other evidence of it. In the New Testament itself we discover various signs that it was so. It appears from one of the Epistles to the Corinthians that, in the early assemblies of the faithful, the believers were expected to come "with an interpretation or a doctrine or a psalm," according to the gift bestowed on each. And in other Epistles from the same hand they are admonished to edify one another "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their hearts unto the Lord." Whatever might be meant by those different terms, they evidently imply a difference. These performances were not mere acts of memory, a repeating of what was already known. They were suggestions of the time, as they found gift and utterance. In the highly poetic parable of the Apocalypse there are interspersed doxologies and apparent fragments of song, that indicate a like origin. In the famous letter of the younger Pliny to the Emperor Trajan, describing the spread and the inoffensive manners of the new Christian sect, he says that they statedly sang a hymn to Christ as a divine person. That hymn could not have been borrowed from the Hebrew Scriptures.

But neither any avowed piece for such a purpose, nor the name of a single person who might have composed one, has come down to us from the first ages of the Church. It is not, indeed, till the close of the second century that the first specimen of them appears, among the works of the Christian Father who produced it,—who has preserved it at least, for he might possibly have copied it from another. It closes the third book of "the *Pedagogue*" of Clement of Alexandria, and is composed of short irregular lines that possess but little

merit. If its predecessors were no better, the world has not suffered much by their loss. From this time they were multiplied, but for the most part to perish. Different parties of those who professed the Redeemer sought to edify themselves, or to illustrate their opinions, by hymns for their special use ; but time has spared neither their sect nor their verses. With the establishment and progress of the Church fervid and gifted spirits turned their efforts in this direction with various success. Even through its rudest ages there flowed a gentle current of sacred song, that will never be wholly "as waters that are passed away." The monkish rhymes, that first became common in the twelfth century, and for which Hildebert, Archbishop of Tours, was especially renowned, often carry with them a strange, wild charm. There are pieces still retained among the Catholic rites, and some of them performed to the most admirable harmonies, which contain in themselves a certain solemn music and cannot easily be read without emotion. Not to speak of inferior examples, there is that fine Judgment Hymn,—*"Dies iræ, dies illa,"*—which, if it has been brought more into notice than it would otherwise have been by the wonderful music of Mozart, will vindicate by its own excellence its claim to immortality. It was probably written by Thomas of Celano, an Italian monk of the thirteenth century ; though it has been claimed for several others by their admiring followers. A version of it by Roscommon, perhaps as good as our stubborn English tongue will easily allow, is contained in Mr. Lunt's *Psalter*. But in the more flexible German speech, it has been translated both by Aug. W. Schlegel and the philosopher Fichte, with its double rhyme thrice repeated throughout.

Protestantism has also been fertile of sacred songs ; and our own times no less than the preceding. The difficulty now is, to select from their multitude those which are best suited to the feelings and wants of a religious assembly. It is a more delicate and arduous task than is commonly apprehended, to choose them well ; to present in due proportion the old and the new ; to make them of sufficient variety and yet united by a common spirit, "gathering them from the masters of assemblies and yet as given from one shepherd ;"—that they may meet the diversities of judgment in different readers, without giving up the individual judgment that should preside over

such a work, sedate and devoutly earnest. Many things are to be considered concerning them. All of them, choose as you will, will scarcely succeed to please all; and some may be missed, that had fallen pleasantly upon the ear in former days. Pieces of acknowledged beauty will be dispensed with because they could not be used to good purpose, and others of inferior merit will be taken because they were wanted. Apart, however, from any particulars, as to what may be there—against our opinion, or absent—to our discontent, there are two points of leading importance, which should be chiefly regarded in every work of this kind. One is its general moral and religious features; and the other is its poetical character.

With respect to the first. It should be solemn, reverent, full of serene and elevating thought, penetrated with a sentiment of unaffected piety. It should recognize Scripture histories. It should deal with doctrinal truths, though not in a direct and didactic manner. While it celebrates the more winning attributes of the Most High, it should adore at the same time the most sublime and awful. It should never lose sight of the dignity, that belongs to holy instruction; nor of the worshipping tone, that becomes the house of prayer. It is eminently a book of devotion. It should not be so much descriptive of natural objects,—and we have seen Collections, where these were the prominent theme,—as it should be inwardly deep, expressing the feelings of suppliant souls. It should look over the round of Christian duty, and track the circle of the Christian year; and yet remember that its office is not to preach, but to sing; and that its attitude is not to be that of one who stands and discourses, but of a spirit that kneels or flies.

What its poetical character should be, is plainly signified by the remarks already made. Its style should be in harmony with its elevated design; subdued, and yet aspiring and fervid, so as to fit its place and vocation. It should be simply noble and touching, and not artificial, not rhetorically ambitious, nor feebly sentimental. It should be close, pointed, bold, not diffuse and common-place. The peculiarities of individual sensibility are less to be displayed, than the universal heart is to be lifted up towards heaven. A hymn is not to relate one's religious experience, but to aid the aspirations of others. The preface to Dr. Belknap's Collection quotes with approbation a saying of Dr. Johnson, concerning religious poetry,

that "the sanctity of the matter rejects the ornaments of figurative diction." We can by no means acquiesce in the decision. Such "diction," while it is inseparable from all the higher kinds of poetry, and is the natural language of excited minds, seems peculiarly serviceable and necessary here, where the subjects treated of can scarcely be presented in any other way. How can we speak, but in figures, of heavenly things? The Scriptures, even in their narrative parts, and where they are most strictly prosaic,—when they prove, when they exhort,—are figurative. What shall we say then, when we go to the Prophets; to the splendid images of the book of Job; to the picture-galleries of that succession of psalmists, whom we still paraphrase and copy? But let us be sure of understanding perfectly the opinion of another, before opposing it. There is certainly a kind of ornament, ornament merely,—light, trivial, secular,—intending nothing but display,—a prettiness or a pretension,—that is nowhere so out of place as in the sanctuary. If this is the kind of ornament intended, let it be excluded with the most severe care. The language of the hymn should follow as closely as possible the idea of a chant. It should be scriptural, church-like. Its imagery should be borrowed from the ancient oracles, made venerable by the associations of thousands of years. It cannot be too brilliant or too daring, if taken from the true treasure-house.

How far these requisitions have been fulfilled in the book, whose title we have set at the head of this article, must be left for its use to show. We will not anticipate the judgment of the public. But it cannot be improper to wish for it the success, to which we think it is eminently entitled. We like it for the copiousness of its materials. We like it for its arrangement of them according to a method, that is simple and obvious, though original,—useful for the minister, complete in itself, instructive to the congregation. We like it for its strength and fervor and deep significance. We like it for its pure taste. We like it for its evident love of the plain, old, lofty style, in which the best pieces in this difficult kind of composition are written. We like it for its steady—we had almost said sturdy—adherence to the original letter of its authorities; restoring them from the defacements, which have been inflicted upon them by modern fastidiousness. There have been grievous faults committed, even quite lately, in this respect. The brave

old lines of Watts, and of others who followed him—as they needs must—with unequal steps, appeared extravagant. They were changed needlessly and effeminately. Their keen glance was hooded, and their swift wing clipped, as if they were made to perch upon children's wrists, instead of soaring up to the sky. We believe that Dr. Greenwood was the first to bring our hymnology back from these corruptions, in his excellent *Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, which enjoys such wide and merited celebrity in our churches. We are glad that the *Christian Psalter* has followed so good an example. We fully justify it in its restoration of the two first lines of the 100th Psalm to the form in which Watts wrote them, and this for two reasons; first, because it shows fidelity to a principle, and also because we hold them to be really better poetry. We were never satisfied with the image presented in the spurious lines, even when we supposed them to be genuine. We have said that we approve of its antique cast. And we do so without reserves, not excepting the four from Sternhold, and the same number from the New England Version. It recommends itself greatly to us by its numerous extracts from Watts, who is the Isaiah of this “goodly fellowship of prophets.” These amount to 263; considerably more than a third part of the whole compilation, and many more than have been selected by any of its precursors, and all exhibited in their native strength. Doddridge comes next in number, as he is next in praise, with 104 hymns; and these two compose more than half of the whole work, which is yet drawn from at least a hundred distinct sources. The Collection is a large one; but we will not find fault with the privilege of a wide choice. Twenty-one of the pieces are from the pen of J. Q. Adams. A disproportionate number, as we have heard it objected. But we consider that most of them are paraphrases of the Psalms, which ought to be pretty largely represented; and the minister of Quincy perhaps deserves the praise of forbearance, with a new version of the whole Psalter before him, and the attraction of a venerable name.

We will only add our hope that this new-strung instrument may contribute to aid the devotional sentiment in the churches that shall adopt it. For otherwise, their liturgy will be so far ineffectual, and their litany impenitent, and their doxology and ascription without any corresponding “grace in the heart.”

N. L. F.

THE DISCIPLINE OF SORROW.

THE trials of life are evidently the occasion of many of our active and passive virtues. Whence else the unwearied toil of the father and the untiring care of the mother? Whence else the devoted benevolence and ardent zeal of the philanthropist? Whence else the firmness and fortitude of the martyr? Whence else sympathy, and patience, and resignation, and the mutual offices of affection?

Trial tends to stop man in the wild career of life, and cause him to take note of his situation and course, to consider what he is, where he is hastening, and what shall be the end of his eager pursuit after the poor things of earth. In the busy struggle for wealth, in the mad strife for power, in the "death-dance of dissipation," he rushes on headlong, careless and reckless of all that is most worthy of his powers, defacing God's image upon his soul, and degrading himself from the rank of a rational and moral being. At such times a Divine hand is stretched out to check him; he is prostrated with disease; his limbs, his muscles, his nerves are racked with pain; and when the power and the inclination to pursue the glittering vanities that were alluring him to destruction are taken from him, then he considers, then he learns his folly, his utter folly, and begins to comprehend the purposes of his existence. He begins to feel that there is a God, whom he has despised; that there is an eternity, which he has left out of the account in his plans for happiness; that he has a spiritual nature, which he has neglected; that there is a spirit-world, where wealth and power and sensual pleasures are forbidden visitors, and where holiness alone can enter and find satisfaction. And will he not be aroused by such thoughts as these? When they throng upon his mind and will not be repelled; when their truth is felt as we seldom feel it; when in the dark chamber silence reigns, the world and its interests are shut out, and the images of the future and of God, of heaven and the spirits of the happy and the unhappy, flit before the eye with that vivid reality which former scenes take to the conception of one struck with blindness, oh! will not then the soul be roused, and the great truths of religion overwhelm it with a sense of their infinite importance?

By suffering, also, the vanity of earthly things is revealed. Hope's wildest wishes, perhaps, have been fulfilled; wealth, power and pleasure have rivalled each other in ministering to the heart's unlimited desires; the palace is now built, and is adorned by the highest efforts of art and genius; crowds of attendants stand waiting; bursts of applause come from admiring nations; and beauty, wine and music chain the senses and entrance the mind. These joys are tasted for a few short hours; but soon comes disease in one of her thousand shapes, and behold, at the uplifting of her wand, the palace with its luxury and splendor vanishes, and nothing remains to its proud possessor but one small, dark, silent room, the single mercenary nurse, and perchance the cup of cold water. How vain are pomp and splendor to the sick man! Now, the love of one affectionate heart, the recollection of one kind act, the sense of one former feeling of thankfulness or purpose of obedience to the Universal Father, would be worth more to sustain the sufferer than the gold and homage of the whole world.

How, too, will the heart be softened by the discipline of pain and sorrow? By success and prosperity it is hardened; it is filled with pride; it scorns the truest virtues; it will not stoop to meekness and humility; it will not be subject to God; it is wilful, perverse, disobedient. The goodness of God, which should lead to repentance and holiness, but encourages the sinner to despise Him whose dealings are those of a kind parent to his beloved child. But wonderful effect of chastisement!—it touches the heart which kindness could not move, and the severity is received with submission, where the gifts of an unceasing, infinite love were but incitements to farther rebellion. Now the kindness of God is recognised; gratitude and love are awakened; the soul throws itself in penitent humility on the mercy of God; and its only, earnest, agonizing prayer is, that it may be entirely submissive, that it may be wholly devoted, and that not its will, but God's will may be done. No longer it cares whether joy or sorrow, life or death, be its lot, for it knows and owns that God's various discipline is but the refiner's fire, and that when He hath tried it, it will come forth as gold. Though the suffering be intense and long continued, it perceives and acknowledges that without it there could be no distinguished examples of patience and resignation, there could be no

perfect purity. Amidst its severest trials it breaths forth the prayer ;—

“ My God, I thank thee ! may no thought
E'er deem thy chastisements severe ;
But may this heart, by sorrow taught,
Calm each wild wish, each idle fear.”

What depths of affection, also, and power of calm endurance, wholly unknown, wholly unsuspected before, are revealed and strengthened by suffering. Who, in the hour of trial, has not been surprised at the unwearied, devoted love of a parent, or child, or friend ? Who, at such a time, has not found in himself a strength of mind, a patience of soul, a resignation of spirit, which seem indeed not of this earth, but sent by Him who “ will not suffer us to be tried beyond what we are able to bear.”

Reader, how is it with you ? Do you need the discipline of sorrow and suffering ? Are you engaged in the chase of the phantom, soul-deluding forms of earth ? Are you rushing on, you know not whither, amidst the pathless woods, the dark ravines, the deadly precipices of life ? Or have you a general respect for religion, but no hearty interest in it ? Have you a vague regard for the will of God, but no ardent love of Him ? Have you a certain admiration of the Saviour, but no lowly trust in him as *your* Saviour ? Is your heart absorbed in the pursuit of pleasure, property or power, and do you care little about the acquisition of perfect integrity and a Christlike holiness ? And has not the goodness of the Father led you to repentance and to better purposes ? Then, no better prayer can be offered in your behalf, than that God may visit you with pain, sorrow and disappointment, if by this means alone your attention may be called to spiritual things, and your affections turned from those allurements which must finally deceive and destroy.

But we need not wait for this discipline of sorrow. God is even now by gentle dealings seeking our souls' best good. Shall we not yield ? Shall we not give up our indifference ? Shall we not, while all is peace and joy around us—while flowers strew our path of life and a cloudless sky shines above us—shall we not teach our hearts to glow with gratitude to the Bestower of our blessings ? Shall we not chasten our passions ? Shall we not devote ourselves to all that is good and holy ? Shall we not, while we breathe an atmosphere of love and bliss, fit ourselves for the enjoyments of our heavenly homes ?

W. C.

NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF THE REV. LANT CARPENTER, LL. D.,
With Selections from his Correspondence. Edited by his Son,
Russell Lant Carpenter, B. A. Bristol & London: 1842.
 pp. 516, 8vo.

SINCE the death of the subject of this Memoir his name and virtues and labors have been frequently mentioned in our pages. A biography of him, which was much to be desired, was promised as soon as the first overwhelming grief which followed his unwarmed death had been soothed. The work, which has been executed by one of his sons, would not be justly described or appreciated if spoken of with epithets of flattery or commendation. There is a childlike and retiring simplicity in its details, an affectionate and sincere earnestness in its tones, which impart such an interest to its perusal, that if we described it truly, we should rather say it had affected than that it had gratified us. The life and character of that faithful minister of Jesus Christ, of whose happy home it is one of our most cherished remembrances that we were permitted for a season to be an inmate,* were singularly fitted to be written out by one of his own children. Some of the most excellent qualities of his heart, though manifest in a distant view of the lineaments of his countenance and apparent upon the most casual intercourse with him, could be traced to their depths and delineated in their beautiful harmonies only by those who were the daily witnesses of his life. We have no fear lest under such circumstances affection should lead to insincerity, or partiality conceal a weakness. Of the biographies of parents written by their children,—very few indeed, there are less of them than of works in any other department of literature, but of these few—we do not know one which we can charge either with weakness or unfaithfulness. In the volume before us we know that the promptings of affection must have been repressed rather than indulged. It presents a simple

* We are indebted to a friend in this instance, as in most of our Notices, for what under this head is published anonymously. ED. MISC.

narrative of events in the life of Dr. Carpenter, illustrated by a few necessary observations and by selections from his papers and correspondence.

Lant Carpenter was born of respectable parents at Kidderminster, September 2, 1780. His father, who was a manufacturer, being unfortunate in his business, the son was adopted by a relative of his mother. His early education was received at Northampton Academy and at Kidderminster. In his youth he exhibited a strong attachment to the young, an interest in their religious education and improvement, which continued through life to be remarkable traits in his character and to occupy a portion of his time. He passed through a regular and complete course of tuition at Glasgow University, from which, when he was settled as a minister at Exeter, though still very young, he received the degree of LL. D. Amidst severe illnesses and other trials he was faithful in the cultivation of his moral and devotional feelings. The earliest influences which affected his mind were on the side of Unitarian Christianity, but no man through a long life ever excelled him in the candour and thoroughness with which he searched the Scriptures to learn their meaning, and made use of all the helps for illustrating them. During his preparatory studies he formed the plans of most of those works which he afterwards executed, and which have ranked him among the most eminent of biblical scholars. On attaining manhood he had completed the University course, and then spent three years in a variety of employments, all bearing upon the interests of education and religion. Having declined various invitations of a similar character, he accepted, at the age of twenty-four, a call from a dissenting congregation in Exeter to become their colleague pastor. He filled this situation for twelve years, being married to one to whom he had long been attached. With feeble health and under heavy burdens he multiplied his labors, carried out extensive and various plans of usefulness, engaged in the instruction of pupils, and appeared frequently as a controversialist and an author. He seems to have won the respect of all denominations of Christians. In the year 1817, at the age of thirty-six, he was called from Exeter to succeed Dr. Estlin, in the Lewin's Mead Congregation at Bristol. It was in this situation that he rose to eminence and attained a wide and a pure fame. His

labors were incessant, his desires, his efforts and his success were always for good. So long as the state of his health permitted he instructed several pupils who boarded in his family. The most attached and conscientious members of the Established Church were glad to put their children under his care. In his family and private relations he was most ardently beloved. Among the ministers of his faith, the place of honor and eminence was cordially yielded to him. A favorable exception was frequently made for him as an individual in the severe censures which were uttered against the Unitarians by their ecclesiastical opponents. The ministry to the poor interested his warmest feelings. His bodily infirmities obliged him to retire for a season from his labors, to travel upon the continent; and on resuming his pastoral care, to relinquish his school, eleven years before his death. In the year 1840, at the age of 59, he was again seeking for renewed health in foreign travel, when on the night of Sunday, April 5, he was lost overboard from a steamer in which he had embarked at Naples for Leghorn. Suddenly and fearfully, yet not without a mingling of mercy, did the summons come to him. His remains were afterwards washed on shore, and were interred upon the sea-coast.

The biography of this good man is summed-up by his son with a faithful and discriminating analysis of his character, under all the numerous relations he had sustained in life; which is followed by a copy of the inscription on the monument erected by his congregation, and a list of his published writings. The whole volume is printed in the best English style, and has prefixed a portrait of Dr. Carpenter, admirable alike for the fidelity of resemblance and the delicacy of the engraving.

THOUGHTS ON MORAL AND SPIRITUAL CULTURE. *By R. C. Waterston.* Boston: Crocker & Ruggles. 1842. pp. 317, 16mo.

THIS a pleasant little volume, full of excellent hints on practical life and the cultivation of the character, copiously illustrated with anecdotes drawn from various sources and with analogies from all

provinces of nature and fancy. Setting a high aim of Christian attainment before the reader, it draws him toward it by a happy mixture of serious admonition with affectionate tenderness and even the graces of poetical ornament. The work does not form a continuous treatise, but is a collection of essays on topics more or less directly connected with the general subject proposed in the title-page. Four of them were written as Addresses on different public occasions, and have been previously printed. Their subjects are *Religious Education, Diffusion of Christianity through Sunday Schools, Moral and Spiritual Culture in Day Schools, and The Best Means of exerting a Moral and Spiritual Influence in Schools*. These, with the piece on the *Influences of Home*, seem to us the choicest portions of the book. The other chapters are on *Childhood, The Growth of the Mind, The Culture of the Imagination, The Love of Nature, The Death of Children*; interspersed with several pieces in verse, and with mottos and quotations of rare beauty and pith.

We have given some idea of the character and contents of this volume. We could give satisfactory specimens of its manner only by occupying more room in extracts than we have at our command. We recommend our readers to the whole. Persons engaged in the training of children will find themselves much aided by the minute practical suggestions as well as by the general spirit of the volume.

MEMOIR OF ELDER ABNER JONES. *By his Son, A. D. Jones.*
Boston: William Crosby & Co. 1842. 12mo. pp. 207.

THE perusal of this little book has interested and instructed us. It makes no literary pretensions, and its whole effect is wrought upon the heart. We confess to have smiled two or three times during its perusal, but our amusement was caused entirely by the simple rusticity of some portions of the volume, and the unvarnished naturalness of some of the incidents which it records. Elder Jones intended to have written out the story of his life with his

own pen, and kept a journal for that purpose ; but sickness terminating in death surprised him, and he left the work to be accomplished by his son. This work has been well performed. There is no attempt on the part of the son to magnify or extol the merits of his father, or to deck out a story which in the simplicity of its own truth is engaging and impressive. Elder Jones was the founder and first preacher of the "Christian Connexion." His early life, struggles and religious experience, his single-hearted earnestness, his fidelity to conscience and truth, his success in clearing himself from the trammels of creeds and working his way to a fair understanding of Christian doctrine, are narrated with great simplicity ; and then his missionary life is followed from place to place, and through the many places where he labored as a devoted pastor and preacher. He always left a good situation for a poor one, and when he had improved this, he sought or accepted a new and more difficult sphere. His brethren have great cause to cherish his memory. We cannot give more space to a notice of this volume, but we urge upon all our readers its perusal. It will afford them instruction and pleasure.

AN OFFERING OF SYMPATHY TO THE AFFLICTED: *especially to Parents bereaved of their Children.* By Francis Parkman. Third Edition. Boston: J. Munroe & Co. 1842. pp. 270, 18mo.

THIS volume is too well known by our readers to need any recommendation, or description of its contents from us. Though small, it is rich in comfort and instruction. The sale of two editions shows that it has been well received by those for whom it was intended. Prepared by the Editor in a season of peculiar personal affliction, it contains many of his own thoughts, with the judicious selections which he made from books from which he drew consolation, besides the original articles which at his request were furnished by his brethren in the ministry. In the present edition not only is the Appendix—of Extracts—enlarged, but an original article is given not found in the former editions.

TWICE-TOLD TALES. By *Nathaniel Hawthorne*. Boston: J. Munroe & Co. 1841. 2 vols. 12mo.

WE are glad of the opportunity to add our voice to the many that have expressed delight in Hawthorne's pure and graceful tales. They are an original and substantial contribution to our literature; essentially American, and though in form and detail fictitious, yet essentially true. The writer's fancy is as chaste as it is free, and his spirit as generous as it is modest. His fancy and his spirit of warm humanity seem to us his strong characteristics. Upon the incidents of his stories he bestows little pains; it is the sentiment which gives them interest, and makes them profitable as well as pleasant reading. We come too, ever and anon, upon some choice expression, some delicate thought clothed in felicitous language, that abides in our hearts, not in our memories alone.

The Tales which compose the first of these two volumes have been printed once, and some of them twice or thrice before. Many a heart has been moved by the story of *The Gentle Boy*. Those who love excitement may not find satisfaction in Hawthorne's writings; but they who like to interweave a scarcely perceptible thread of superstition and the rich coloring of sentiment with the texture of every-day life, will be pleased; and they who believe it is good to be moved by the eloquence of tranquil and tender thought will acknowledge the benefit to be derived from these books.

MONSTRAT VIAM. *An Address delivered before the Independent Company of Cadets, on their Centennial Anniversary, October 19, 1841, at the Church in Brattle Square.* By *Rev. Samuel K. Lothrop, Chaplain of the Corps*. Boston: J. H. Eastburn. 1841. pp. 60, 8vo.

OUR peace principles incline us to look with some dissatisfaction on the title, "Chaplain of the Corps," appended to the name of a Christian minister; but apart from what seems to us the error of a

clergyman's connecting himself with military affairs, except in the extreme case when only war can be justified—and then even we have our doubts—we say without hesitation that Mr. Lothrop delivered an excellent Address on the occasion which converted the chaplain into the orator. The "Cadets" are the body-guard of the Governor of this Commonwealth, and till we read this Address we had supposed they were more remarkable for their rich equipments and handsome bearing than for any exhibition of martial prowess. It seems however that at different periods of their history they have "done the State good service," and have maintained the free and firm spirit of patriotism. Mr. Lothrop, as was proper, devotes the greater part of his Address to the history of the Company, the principal incidents in which are judiciously selected, and then notices the policy which to some extent has been adopted, and the principles which have been advocated, in respect to the disuse of military force. He briefly examines the doctrine of non-resistance, and if his summary of the objections to which it is liable does not wholly satisfy us on the subject, it contains the substance of many a long argument, clearly and forcibly expressed. He concludes with urging the members of the Corps in obedience to its motto, "*to point the way to duty and glory.*" The typographical execution of the pamphlet deserves notice for its rare, and almost perfect beauty.

REVERENCE AND FAMILY DISCIPLINE. *Two Sermons preached at Portsmouth, N. H., on the day of the Annual Thanksgiving, November 25, and on the Sabbath following, November 28, 1841. By Andrew P. Peabody, Pastor of the South Church. Published by request. Portsmouth: 1841. pp. 28, 8vo.*

EXCELLENT sermons are these in the main. A slight tone of exaggeration runs through them, arising from the writer's strong perception of the evils on which he comments; and in one instance he uses language which, if we understand its aim, is needlessly and unjustly severe. Whatever Mr. Peabody may think of the

"spirit and tendency" of the "novelties and vagaries," the "vague and wild theories and speculations" which have of late been broached,—and we concur with him in most which he has said—he is not justified in speaking of them as "this Christianity without Christ, this religion without reverence, faith or prayer." False and hurtful as we think many of these speculations are, we neither believe their authors entertain any such conception of their import as is here presented, nor do we deem it fair to give such a description of their character.

The "irreverent spirit" of the times has called forth these discourses. The preacher notices the illustrations of this spirit afforded by the premature advancement of young men, by the disrespect for laws and rulers, and by many of the theological tendencies of the day. Its origin he traces to "the decline of domestic discipline and subordination;" with some remarks upon the importance of which the first sermon closes. The second discourse is devoted to a consideration "of some of the chief deficiencies in the domestic management of children;" of which are noticed the lack of parental watchfulness—skepticism respecting the influence of moral causes upon the young—a low standard of character adopted for children by their parents—too early emancipation from parental guidance and control—neglect of the institutions of domestic piety—and unfaithful example in the heads of a household. On these various points the remarks of the preacher are sound and forcible.

THE CHURCH. *A Discourse delivered at the Dedication of the new Church of the First Parish in Concord, Mass., December 29, 1841. By Barzillai Frost, Pastor of the Society. Published by request. Boston: J. Munroe & Co. 1842. pp. 31, 8vo.*

MR. FROST'S Sermon, of which we gave an account in our last number, in a notice of the occasion on which it was delivered, is now published, and will repay perusal. "The material church" he considers "but an incident and symbol of the spiritual church,

the true communion of believers;" and therefore occupies himself chiefly in discussing the nature of the true church, the character of the truth of which according to his text—1 Timothy iii. 15—it is "the pillar and ground," and the manner in which the church gives the truth this support. In his remarks under the two first heads Mr. Frost has now and then expressed himself, we fear, without sufficient care—too much after the manner of some whose opinions we know he does not regard with approbation. These are slight blemishes. The concluding part of the sermon contains many interesting notices of the past. The people of Concord were from the first faithful in providing for themselves religious institutions. In 1635, "the very year they came into this wilderness it was 'Ordered, that the meeting-house stand on the hill near the brook.' " In 1667 another house was built. In 1712 a third, "of which the present" or new "house is but the transformation," was erected. The original structure "was nearly square, three stories high, two galleries, long seats, the men on one side, the women on the other, and the children in the middle. The windows were made of sheet lead, with small diamond lights inserted." Such was a New England meeting-house at the beginning of the last century. Yet this was not the work of a rash architect, nor the result of a hasty movement. "Although on the first ballot it was voted unanimously to build, yet five whole days were spent in town-meeting, and three different committees were chosen, before they could decide upon the course to be adopted. Every thing, down even to the dimensions of every stick of timber, was settled in open town-meeting." "So jealous were our fathers of their liberties," adds Mr. Frost. We suspect the jealousy in this instance deserved no better name than self-will.

SELF-RECKONING. *A Sermon : preached on the First Sabbath of the year MDCCCXLII. By Joseph Angier, Pastor of the First Parish in Milton. Published by request. Boston : J. G. Torrey. 1842. pp. 20, 8vo.*

ONE who should examine this discourse by the rules which are laid down in books for the composition of sermons would doubtless find occasion for censure ; he would say that the interrogative form

of the sentence is used to excess, and that the heads of the discourse are not sufficiently distinct. But however useful such rules may be, the excellence of a sermon does not depend on close adherence to them. Those sermons do the most good, which speak in direct terms to the conscience and life of the hearer. Judged by this standard, the discourse before us must be pronounced a good one,—such as a faithful minister should preach, and such as if preached could not be without effect. Mr. Angier calls his people to the work of self-examination, and shows them how this work should be conducted. He urges them at the commencement of a new year to see what the result of the last twelve months' enjoyment of life and its privileges has been upon the amount of their religious knowledge—upon their moral dispositions, principles and habits—upon their performance of the various duties of the domestic relations—upon their discharge of their social obligations—and upon their general conformity to the Christian spirit and standard. Having suggested these as the principal topics of inquiry which they should pursue, he closes with a solemn reference to the folly of neglecting or postponing this exercise of “proving their own selves,” to which the text—2 Corinthians xiii. 15—immediately points them.

A DISCOURSE *delivered on the occasion of the Death of John Vaughan, in the First Congregational Unitarian Church, Sunday, January 16, 1842. By William H. Furness, Pastor of the Church. With the Services of the Funeral.* Philadelphia: 1842. pp. 32, 8vo.

MR. FURNESS has here paid a just and affectionate tribute to the memory of his venerable friend—a man widely known, and wherever known, admired and loved. Who that has seen Philadelphia has not experienced Mr. Vaughan's kindness? Who that has heard of Philadelphia, has not been told of his benevolence and activity? His life, through years of prosperity and of straitened circumstances, by day and by night, was spent in promoting the

happiness and comfort of his fellow-men. The stranger, the poor, the blind, were indebted to him for offices as efficient as they were disinterested. A man "full of good works" was taken from human society when his days came to their end, at the advanced age of eighty-five.

In the Discourse before us Mr. Furness does not attempt to present a picture of Mr. Vaughan's life, or to give more than a general view of his character. "The genial glow of his affections," undeniably the source of that beauty and strength of character by which he was distinguished, is particularly noticed. His life is well described in a single expression—"the activity of usefulness." The favorable circumstances of his childhood, passed under the ministry of Dr. Price and partly under the teaching of Mrs. Barbauld, prepared him for that open and consistent support of Unitarian Christianity, which he gave not only in his daily life, but for many years by the part he took, together with Mr. Eddowes and Mr. Taylor, in conducting the public worship of the Unitarian congregation of Philadelphia. "Is any one curious to know about his religion? It was in his life. He lived in it, and it in him." A lover of science and literature, he did much for their promotion, especially through his connexion with the American Philosophical Society. The benevolent institutions of his adopted city were indebted to him for abundant services, and of the Institution for the Blind "he was emphatically the founder." His activity was scarcely diminished, nor his usefulness impaired, by the increase of years. In the words which Mr. Furness aptly chose for his text, he belonged to those who "still bring forth fruit in old age." He has now "rested from his labors"—to him never unwelcome nor wearisome labors of beneficence, "and his works," though in part they remain on earth, yet "do follow him" with their testimony to heaven.

The services at the funeral of Mr. Vaughan were performed at the Unitarian church on the Sunday but one preceding that on which the Discourse was delivered, and consisted of portions of Scripture read by Rev. William Ware, an Address by Rev. Mr. Furness, prayer, and sacred music. We repeat the closing words of the pamphlet under our notice, for they are most appropriate,—
"Ever hallowed be the memory of the just."

INTELLIGENCE.

ORDINATION IN BOSTON, MASS.—Rev. James I. T. Coolidge, of Boston, and lately of the Theological School at Cambridge, was ordained Pastor of the Purchase Street Congregational Church and Society in Boston on Wednesday evening, February 9, 1842. The services of the occasion, though prolonged to a late hour, were attended by an audience that entirely filled the house and manifested no signs of impatience to the last. They were as follows:—Introductory Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Gray of Boston; Reading Selections from Scripture, by Rev. Mr. Robbins of Boston; Sermon, by Rev. Mr. Gannett of Boston; Ordaining Prayer, by Rev. Dr. Parkman of Boston; Charge, by Rev. Mr. Putnam of Roxbury; Right Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. Mr. Bartol of Boston; Address to the People, by Rev. Mr. Ripley of Newton, former minister of the Society; Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Waterston of Boston.

Mr. Gannett took for his subject—a devoted ministry; and for his text—the direction of Paul, in Colossians iv. 17, “Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, to fulfil it.” He argued in favor of such a ministry from the devotion with which men pursue other employments of life—from the aim and purpose of the ministry—from the nature of the considerations by which it endeavors to persuade men—from the character of the functions which it assumes, especially in preaching, the object of which should be to produce an effect—from the importance of the minister’s example—from the character of those whom he addresses, as impressible and imitative creatures, and from their situation in the midst of the circumstances of the world—from the connexion of devotedness with the minister’s own comfort—and from the assurance which it gives of success, as illustrated through the whole history of the Christian Church. The character and extent of the devotedness, which had been urged on these several grounds, were then made subjects of remark; the need was shown of such a ministry for the city not less than for the country; and the sermon was closed by a notice of certain characteristics of the times, which show its importance.

The other services of the evening were strictly appropriate, and through them all ran a more than usual harmony in the selection of topics and the expression of sentiments. The occasion derived peculiar interest from the recent circumstances of the Society. After Mr. Ripley’s resignation several of the congregation preferred to worship

elsewhere, and those who remained felt the discouragement arising from lessened numbers and the unfavorable situation of the house, standing as it does almost on the margin of the city, and therefore convenient of access to a comparatively small part of the population. Doubts were entertained concerning the stability of the Society, and although a respectable body of worshippers still remained together, with a house which had cost nearly \$40,000 and was subject to a debt of only \$4500, they regarded the prospect before them with anxiety. Mr. Coolidge's acceptance of the invitation which they unanimously gave him was therefore received with great satisfaction and joy, and his ordination awakened a general feeling of interest among those who had sympathised with the Society in their anxieties. We rejoice in the change which has taken place in their condition. Many new members, we understand, have joined the Society, the house has been filled since Mr. Coolidge's ordination, and the pews, with few exceptions, are either sold or let. We trust that a season of spiritual as well as temporal prosperity is before the congregation under the guidance of their new teacher.

INSTALLATION AT PEMBROKE, MASS.—On Wednesday, February 9, 1842, Rev. Joshua Chandler was installed as Pastor of the Congregational Church and Society in Pembroke. The services of the occasion were as follows:—Introductory Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Sweet of Kingston; Reading of the Scriptures, by Rev. Mr. Leonard of Marshfield; Sermon, by Rev. Mr. Barrett of Boston; Prayer of Installation, by Rev. Mr. Richardson of Hingham; Charge, by Rev. Dr. Kendall of Plymouth; Right Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. Mr. Moore of Duxbury; Address to the People, by Rev. Mr. Allen, the former minister of the Society; Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Briggs of Plymouth.

Mr. Barrett took for his text, Ephesians iv. 11, 12, 13; "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The sermon was introduced by some remarks illustrative of the truth, suggested by the closing words of the text, that the Gospel's chief end is man's spiritual growth—that this religion, instead of finding fault with his nature and endeavoring to destroy or alter its essential principles, regards him as coming from his Creator's hand rightly constituted,

and while it seeks to prevent or correct all abuse of his faculties, strives to unfold them in due order and to the utmost extent of their capacity and power, deeming its main purpose accomplished when it has trained him up to the state of true manhood, intellectually, morally, and religiously, according to the full measure of the stature of Christ. The preacher then proceeded to the principal object of his discourse, which was, so to describe the high capabilities of human nature, so to direct attention to the great model of character set forth in the Gospel, and so to explain the suitableness and value of the various means enjoyed by Christians—such particularly as the Bible, the Sabbath, the Church, the Ministry, &c.,—for their spiritual culture and growth, as to produce in his auditors clearer perceptions and deeper feelings respecting the reasonableness, propriety, need, and duty of cherishing elevated views of what they can and ought to become, of aiming at the highest standard of moral and religious excellence, and of striving with the utmost earnestness and energy to reach the perfection which their nature and Christianity and the providence of God bid them pray and labor for, and which these concur in enabling them to attain.

The day was fine, and the beautiful church, recently erected by the parish, was filled with people who manifested a deep interest in the services. Much of the pleasure and instructiveness of the occasion was owing to the presence and wise counsels of the venerable Mr. Allen, who had, a few months before and at his own request, been released from the duties of the pastoral office, after having performed them during forty years; but who consented, at this time, to address the Church and Society. The satisfactions of the day were farther enhanced by the knowledge, that the people continued to regard him with respect and affection, and that it was with commendable promptness and entire unanimity they had made choice of a successor.

WARREN STREET CHAPEL.—This useful institution, virtually, though not in form, a branch of the Ministry-at-large in this city, is conducted by Rev. Charles F. Barnard, with the zealous and diligent assistance of others, of both sexes, who cooperate with him in his plans for the instruction and moral improvement of the poor and neglected children to whom he devotes most of his time. The difference between Mr. Barnard's labors and those of the ministers connected with the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches consists in the selection of children as the objects of his attention. The Chapel, standing on Warren Street, not far from Washington Street, in the southerly part of the city, was

erected five years since—a commodious brick building, with rooms suitable for schools or other purposes on the lower floor, a large chapel occupying the whole of the second story, and a convenient library-room over the chapel. The expense was defrayed by subscription, and an Association was then formed “for the support of the Warren Street Chapel.” Services are held at the usual hours on Sunday; the devotional exercises being taken from a Liturgy prepared for the Chapel by Rev. Dr. Greenwood, and the music consisting in great part of chants led by the organ. The Sunday School in its different departments contains nearly five hundred children. A Sewing School for girls is held once a week, and an Evening School for boys twice a week. The whole number of children who attend the religious worship at the chapel is about six hundred, many of whom are regularly accompanied by their parents and other members of their families. The Library is much used, and the books that are taken out, it is believed, are read. A series of Tracts has been published for the special benefit of those who are connected with the Chapel. A Cabinet of Natural History has also been provided, and much attention is given to flowers. In the summer the children make an excursion into one of the neighboring towns, and spend a day in company with their teachers among the pleasant scenes and in the fresh air of the country. During the winter a Course of Lectures is delivered weekly, the admission to which is placed at only fifty cents for the season. Mr. Barnard visits constantly the families whose children come to the schools or to the chapel, and in these visits particularly discharges the office of a Minister-at-large. The expenses of the institution are met by receipts accruing from annual subscriptions, from the sale of tickets for the Lectures, from the annual sale of flowers on the morning of the Fourth of July, when the children with their teachers march in procession to “the Common,” with bouquets, flower-baskets &c. almost numberless, which they are enabled to prepare through the kindness of their friends in the country, and from other incidental sources.

On Sunday evening, February 13, 1842, the Annual Sermon in aid of the Chapel was delivered in the Federal Street meeting-house, by Rev. Henry Giles. In former years the services of this occasion have been attended at the chapel; the last year Dr. Channing delivered the Address on Dr. Tuckerman's ministry, which has since been printed; but the place was found to be too small, and a larger as well as more central house was therefore chosen. Mr. Giles gave a discourse on the contrasted conditions of childhood, when surrounded by the influences of a Christian home, and when exposed to neglect, hardship and vice. The audience filled the church, and were evidently impressed by the pictures which were set before them.

BOSTON PORT SOCIETY.—An interesting meeting of the members and friends of the "Port Society of the city of Boston and its vicinity" was held in the Federal Street Congregational meeting-house, on Sunday evening, February 27, 1842, just ten years since a similar meeting was held in the same place for the purpose of presenting the objects of the Society, then little known, to the public. That meeting was eminently successful; and the late meeting, held in the hope of awakening a new interest on the part of the merchants, and the community, in an institution whose character and wants need only to be explained to secure for it the largest encouragement, will, we have no doubt, be followed by a like result. The Port Society was organized among the Methodists of this city in 1828, for the moral and religious benefit of seamen and their families. An act of incorporation was obtained in February, 1829—thirteen years ago, and Rev. Edward T. Taylor was appointed the minister, by whose labors the good contemplated by the Society should mainly be effected. By the provisions of the By-laws the minister receives his appointment from the Bishop or Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, subject however to the approbation of the Society; but at the same time the institution is guarded against sectarian influence by articles, prohibiting sectarianism in the management of its affairs, authorising the minister to exchange with clergymen of every denomination, and requiring him to introduce those who may come under his instruction, and who may wish to join a Christian church, to the pastor of any church which they may prefer. The formation of a church in connexion with the Bethel has of course taken away the occasion for this last article; but we believe the minister and the Managers have faithfully observed the spirit of these articles.

At the commencement of their operations the Society used, and subsequently purchased, a small meeting-house formerly occupied by a Methodist congregation in Methodist Alley. It soon became necessary to provide a larger place of worship, and the commodious Bethel in North Square was erected at a cost of \$28,000; \$24,000 of which were contributed by merchants and others of Boston. The annual expenses of the Bethel, including the minister's salary, amount to between \$1700 and \$1800; the receipts to about \$1200,—derived from two sources, viz. the rent of shops under the Bethel, and the voluntary contributions on Sunday from those who worship there. This latter source of income has been gradually increasing; at first less than \$100 annually, it last year amounted to \$592; furnishing a decisive proof of the interest taken in the Bethel by those for whom it was established. The deficiency in the income, growing out of the natural decrease of subscriptions where no special care had been taken to keep them at their original amount, it

was one of the objects of the late meeting to supply. Of the good which has been accomplished it is impossible to entertain a doubt. One hundred and twenty thousand persons, it is estimated, have been brought under Christian influences by this means within thirteen years. Mr. Taylor is indefatigable in his efforts for a class whose dangers, wants, and characters he fully understands. The Sunday services of the Bethel constitute but a small part of his labors. Meetings are held every evening in the week, at the Vestry, at the Mariners' House, or in some other place, for religious discourse and prayer. Great exertions have been made to rescue the sailor from the grasp of landlords who seize upon him as soon as he sets foot on shore, and soon plunder him of all his earnings under the guise of charges for board and liquor. The *Seamen's Aid Society*, though distinct from the *Port Society*, including only females among its members, has afforded Mr. Taylor efficient aid. Their ninth Annual Report, lately published, speaks of their "School for seamen's daughters," which has been sustained the last year at an expense of \$400; their "Stores," where garments are sold at a fair price to sailors, and whence work is furnished to needy women, about sixty of whom have been employed the last year, and have been paid \$1304; and their "Mariners' House," which has received nine hundred boarders the last year, some of whom have been gratuitously entertained. Who can question the benefit of such arrangements for the relief of the destitute and the salvation of the lost?

At the meeting last Sunday evening Thomas B. Curtis, Esq., presided. Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. True of the Methodist church, a Report was read by the Secretary of the Port Society, Rev. Mr. Taylor addressed the audience, and was followed by several members of the Bethel church, "living witnesses of the usefulness and influence of this charity in turning many from sin unto righteousness," who bore "testimony to what they had experienced through its instrumentality upon their own hearts and lives." Remarks were then made by William Sturgis, Moses Grant, and Jonathan Chapman, Esqs., and the meeting was closed with prayer by Rev. Mr. Taylor.

INCREASE OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST.—It gratifies us to speak of an increase of religious interest among the members of our congregations. If it were asked what we mean by religious interest, we should answer—interest in religion as a personal and practical concern. We think there has been for some time a growing sensibility to the importance of the

religious life, and a serious inquiry, what are Christian obligations and how can they be discharged? This winter the evidences of such a state of feeling have become more open and decisive. A desire has been expressed, and in various ways exhibited, for more religious action. Especially have we noticed a wish for more frequent opportunities of strengthening the Christian character through the use of the social element which belongs to our nature, and by which religion may be assisted in effecting the work of personal sanctification. Religious meetings on other days than Sunday, and in other places than the church, are much more common, and are better attended, than formerly. Bible classes have been formed, Vestry meetings are held, meetings at private houses for religious conversation and for social prayer have been introduced, and in different places different manifestations have been given of a more earnest attention to the things of the soul. Many are asking, whether they ought not to do more than they have done for the spread of Christian truth and piety. A more liberal support is afforded to our Associations for religious objects. And to a considerable extent a more positive religious life may be said to pervade our denomination. For in these remarks we do not include Boston nor its vicinity alone, but our congregations on every side and at wide distances.

There is one feature in this movement which we look upon with peculiar satisfaction, and which gives us confidence in respect to its character and its continuance. It is spontaneous, as far as we can learn. It has not been forced upon the people by any extraneous influence. No foreign excitement has startled them out of their usual habits. The clergy have not adopted any violent means or extraordinary measures to produce a fitful sensibility. Whatever increase of religious feeling or action may be witnessed has grown up naturally under the instructions and institutions to which the people have been accustomed. We therefore rejoice in it, and only desire that the zeal to which it may conduct us may never lack the attributes of wisdom, humility and modesty.

DECLINE OF THE THEATRE.—In one of the newspapers of this city we noticed last month mention of the fact, that "the Tremont theatre finally closed on Friday evening, after a disastrous season to the lessees, who after struggling to bear up against heavy losses were compelled to throw up their lease." In a subsequent paper it is announced, that a part "of the late Tremont company have leased the theatre on favorable

terms, and will open it again in the course of a week." The latter announcement however does not weaken the inference to be drawn from the former,—that the theatre is not frequented as it was in other days. We find it admitted indeed by those who favor this institution, that Boston presents only an example of a prevalent decline in the fondness for theatrical amusements; for in other cities, we are told, instances have repeatedly occurred of failure on the part of Proprietors and Managers. We cannot be expected to understand all the causes of this change in the tastes of the people, but some of them are obvious. Some influence, though not much, we think, may be allowed to the views which have been expressed by religious teachers. More efficient causes have been the increase of cheaper amusements, which have made it necessary to reduce the prices of admission to the theatre, which however could not bear so great a reduction of income while its expenses remained undiminished; the multiplication of lectures, which have afforded occupation and entertainment for those hours which were once given to the theatre, from the want, by many persons, of other better attraction without their own homes; and the perversion of the stage, from a place of dramatic exhibition to the floor of mere *spectacle*, or the scene of buffoonery and indecency. Bad as the theatre was in its best days, it sunk immeasurably lower when it invited the public to witness the indelicate exhibition of herself by a woman whose grace of motion only gave notoriety to her prostitution of character. We rejoice that even the theatre could not bear this incumbrance of infamy. If the result should open the eyes of the lovers of scenic performance to their duty, and inspire a determination to make the stage a source of intellectual and not of animal excitement, the means of innocent pleasure and not the pander of loose morals, good may come out of evil. Till such a change can be brought about, and a character be given to the theatre which even in its least objectionable state it has failed to sustain, we shall be glad to hear that every theatre on the continent is "finally closed."

LIBERAL BEQUEST.—The late Benjamin Bussey Esq. of Roxbury, who recently died at the age of 85, by his will made Harvard University the final possessor of his estate, the value of which, it is said, cannot be less than \$350,000. His mansion-house and grounds at Jamaica Plain are to be held forever as a Seminary for "instruction in practical agriculture, in useful and ornamental gardening, in botany, and in such other branches of natural science as may tend to promote a knowledge

of practical agriculture and the various arts subservient thereto and connected therewith." The Government of the University is directed to "cause such Courses of Lectures to be delivered there, at such seasons of the year and under such regulations as they may think best adapted to promote the ends designed; and also to furnish gratuitous aid, if they shall think it expedient, to such meritorious persons as may resort there for instruction." One half of the net income of the property which he has left is to be expended in maintaining this Seminary, and the other half of the income, it is directed, shall be equally divided between the Divinity School and the Law School at Cambridge.—This liberal provision for three of the most important branches of practical education will not probably become available for many years, the estate being put into the hands of trustees for the use and benefit of three persons successively, after the death of the last of whom only can it accrue to the University.

NESTORIAN CHRISTIANS.—The Nestorians bear a name well known to the reader of ecclesiastical history, but not so familiar to those acquainted only with the events of modern times. We owe to the missionary spirit of our age our knowledge of their present state. A mission was established among them eight years since by the American Board, and one of the missionaries who were then sent out, Rev. Justin Perkins, has lately returned to this country and brought, as he had already by letter communicated, much interesting information respecting their condition and character. The Nestorians whom he visited live in Koordistan, in Asiatic Turkey, on the borders of Persia. Their number is computed at 140,000; 40,000 of whom are found in the district of Ooroomiah, where Mr. Perkins resided. They are Christians, whose faith has been well proved, and whose dislike of some of the peculiar tenets of the Church of Rome has obtained for them the title of "the Protestants of Asia." When the American missionaries arrived among them, both their intellectual and religious condition is described as exceedingly low. The missionaries however were welcomed with demonstrations of joy, and have been ever since cordially treated by both ecclesiastics and people. One of the first measures carried into effect was the establishment of a school, into which some of the native teachers, and even dignitaries of the Church, have been received. Other elementary schools have been opened, and now amount to twenty, attended by five hundred pupils. A press has been established among them, and the printing of tracts and of the

Scriptures been commenced. The most favorable circumstance, in the judgment of the missionaries, is the invitation which, after they had resided some time in Ooroomiah, was unexpectedly given them, to preach in the pulpits of the regular clergy. The invitation was gladly accepted, and they now preach constantly on Sundays to some of the congregations.

These facts, with many others, were presented in a lecture lately delivered before the "Young Men's Society for Diffusing Missionary Knowledge" in this city, by Rev. Mr. Perkins, at the conclusion of whose address Mar Yohanna, a Nestorian bishop, made a few remarks in tolerably good English. Mar Yohanna had so strong a desire to see this country, that he accompanied Mr. Perkins on his visit to America, defraying the expenses of his voyage from his own resources. He expressed his joy at the arrival of the missionaries in his own country, and his gratification with what he had seen of Christian institutions and the Christian life in this land.

MONUMENT TO DR. PRICE.—In the Miscellany for February, 1841, (Vol. IV. p. 117) we copied the inscription on a tablet recently erected to the memory of Mrs. Barbauld, in the Chapel at Newington-Green, near London, where Dr. Price for many years officiated as minister. A similar monument has since been placed in the same Chapel to commemorate the character and services of this excellent man; the inscription on which is as follows:—

TO THE MEMORY OF

RICHARD PRICE, D. D., F. R. S.

Twenty-six Years Minister of this Chapel;

Born at Tynton, Glamorganshire, February 23d, 1723;

Died at Hackney, Middlesex, April 19th, 1791.

Theologian, Philosopher, Mathematician;

Friend to Freedom as to Virtue;

Brother of Man;

Lover of Truth as of God;

His Eminent Talents were matched by his Integrity,

Simplicity, and Goodness of Heart;

His Moral Dignity by his Profound Humility.

Few have been more useful in their generation,

Or more valued by the wise and good;

None more pure and disinterested.

Honored be his Name!

Imitated his Example!